SATURDAY JANUARY 5, 2019

SINCE 1845

THE STRAITS TIMES

Life Shared offices up the appeal D4&5



Home
Top sportsmen – and IB students B1&2



Opinion Koreans find joy in old homes A33



Sport
Star teams to watch in Asian Cup C12



Top of the News
Asian markets shrug off poor start to year A6



Opinion Birth pangs of 'New Malaysia' A32 • Business Long-term investment trends in the spotlight C1

Raffles gets four companions by Singapore River

A statue of Sang Nila Utama, who first saw a vision of a lion and established the kingdom of Singapura in 1299, has been installed next to the iconic statue of Stamford Raffles by the Singapore River.

The Palembang prince is one of four new companions to Raffles, in a project commissioned by the Singapore Bicentennial Office to present a more holistic picture of the island's history.

The other three new statues are of pioneers Tan Tock Seng, Munshi Abdullah and Naraina Pillai, who were among the first settlers to arrive here in 1819.

The Bicentennial Office said the statues "were fabricated to last for only one year" and will be removed by the end of the year.

SEE TOP OF THE NEWS A8



The statues of Sang Nila Utama, Tan Tock Seng, Munshi Abdullah and Naraina Pillai have been installed next to the iconic one of Stamford Raffles by the Singapore River. The new statues are part of a project by the Singapore Bicentennial Office to present a more holistic picture of the island's history. ST PHOTO: LIM YAOHUI

Singaporean militant killed, says Philippines

Philippine security forces say that they killed a Singaporean militant about two weeks ago on the war-torn southern Philippine island of Mindanao.

The man was identified as Abu Hud Zain, though it was not clear whether this was his real name.

He was killed alongside an Indonesian militant and two Filipinos. Their deaths highlight the worrying presence of foreign nationals in the battlefields of southern Philippines.

Meanwhile, in Indonesia, anti-terror unit Detachment 88 put 396 militants out of action last year, a spike from the 176 in 2017.

Some observers say the figure exposes the growing extent of militancy in Indonesia.

SEE WORLD A11&12

Tropical storm wreaks havoc in south Thailand

Pabuk claims at least one victim; airports in area closed, stranding thousands of tourists

Tan Hui Yee
Indochina Bureau Chief
In Bangkok

The first tropical storm in three decades to hit Thailand battered its southern coast yesterday, shutting down airports and leaving thousands of tourists stranded. At least one fisherman was killed.

Tropical Storm Pabuk, with winds reaching 75kmh, made landfall in Nakhon Si Thammarat province yesterday afternoon, causing widespread damage.

Thailand's Meteorological Department warned in an evening update: "People should beware of the severe conditions that cause forest run-offs and flash floods, especially over tonight."

Three airports – in Nakhon Si Thammarat and Surat Thani provinces and also Koh Samui – were closed, as some 10,000 people were evacuated in Nakhon Si Thammarat alone to ride out the storm that is expected to last until today.

All ships have been ordered ashore as waves up to 5m high were expected in the Gulf of Thailand.

The strong winds crumbled rooftops, uprooted trees and felled electrical poles, while the rain inundated roads.

Off nearby Pattani province, one fisherman died and another was reported missing after their trawler sank in choppy waters yesterday, reported the Bangkok Post.

The crew were trying to make it to shore after getting a storm warning. Four survived.

Nakhon Si Thammarat Vice-Governor Thawornwat Kongkaew told The Straits Times: "Many people were reluctant to evacuate until they encountered the strong waves."

The province had prepared 190 shelters to handle 80,000 evacuees. "One centre in Pak Phanang district that we planned to house 2,000 people already has 5,000," he said. "The electricity has been cut off in the areas that have been hit, so that will make it difficult for us to give aid. But help is coming, and I am sure we will be fine."

Meanwhile, the Thai navy loaded up its only aircraft carrier with drinking water and other relief supplies in preparation for rescue operations.

The storm hit during the kingdom's peak tourist season.

With boats banned from leaving the shore, Thai government vessels were dispatched to pick up tourists stranded on the Andaman Sea islands off Phuket, such as Koh Racha and Koh Phi Phi, local media said.

Koh Phi Phi was made famous by the Leonardo DiCaprio movie, The Beach.

Over in the Gulf of Thailand – where the popular holiday destination of Koh Samui is located – tourists who chose to stay put amid earlier evacuations spent time on land.

Ms Rumleuk Assavachin, the owner of a diving resort on Koh Tao, a popular island off Surat Thani province, told The Straits Times: "We stopped diving trips this afternoon. But there is enough food and electricity on the island, so it is okay."

The Meteorological Department expects the storm to weaken to a tropical depression.

When Pabuk, earlier named Usman, rolled across the Philippines last week, it dumped almost a month's worth of rain in two days in some areas, causing landslides in the central part of the country. At least 85 people there are confirmed dead.

Earlier this week, Vietnamese airline Vasco cancelled flights between Ho Chi Minh City and the islands of Con Dao as a precaution.

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SEE TOP OF THE NEWS A4

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10 must-reads for today

1 Singapore aced IB exams
Students here have fared better than their global counterparts in the International Baccalaureate (IB) diploma exams. There were 38 perfect scorers this year – more than half of the 68 worldwide. Almost 98 per cent of the students here passed the exams, compared with the 69 per cent globally. HOME B1



Students from the School of the Arts receiving their International Baccalaureate diploma exam results at the school yesterday. Almost all of the 2,152 students here – or 97.99 per cent – who sat the exams last November passed. PHOTO: SCHOOL OF THE ARTS

2 Storm lashes Thailand
Tropical storm Pabuk battered Thailand's southern coast yesterday, shutting down airports, suspending ferry services and stranding thousands of tourists. At least one person was killed and 10,000 people were evacuated after the first tropical storm in three decades hit Thailand. TOP OF THE NEWS A1

3 Red Dot Power bows out
Fierce competition has led to one retailer, Red Dot Power, pulling out of the electricity market. About 3,000 customers will have their electricity accounts transferred back to SP Group. The Energy Market Authority said customers will not experience electricity disruptions if retailers pull out. TOP OF THE NEWS A4

4 'Worrying' haul of militants
Some 396 militants were put out of action by the Indonesian police last year, a sharp jump from 176 in 2017, in a sign that the police have made successful efforts in foiling possible attacks. But the record number of terror suspects has led observers to warn of the extent of the country's problem in dealing with militancy and terrorism. WORLD A12

5 Death by fish fumes
An 11-year-old boy with a seafood allergy in the United States has died after suffering a severe reaction from inhaling fumes from a cod fish that his grandmother had been cooking. While experts said such allergic reactions are rare, research shows that fish protein can be detected in steam and fumes during cooking or processing. WORLD A22



Devices installed in forest canopies listen for sounds linked to logging and poaching, and send alerts. PHOTO: RAINFOREST CONNECTION

6 Listening to save forests
Satellites provide a big picture of the health of the planet's green spaces but cannot reveal what happens under the canopy, such as poaching or fires. Bioacoustic systems can document a wide range of species and detect changes in ecological communities. SCIENCE A31

7 Malaysia in transition
As an untested ruling coalition, Malaysia's Pakatan Harapan needs time. That said, its leaders need to better manage fissures within the coalition and its constituent members or face further loss of confidence, says Joseph Chinyong Liow. OPINION A32

8 Agents' HDB deals online
The track records of property agents dealing in Housing Board flats are now available online. The Council for Estate Agencies has posted on its website the resale transactions in the last two years, which include details like when the flat changed hands and whether the agent represented the buyer or seller. HOME B2

9 Money on athleisure market
Athleisure is a sector ripe for long-term investment given that in recent years, the share prices of athleisure-oriented sports brands have outpaced other brands that focused solely on sports performance. BUSINESS C1

10 Rookie paddlers get bronze
Anglo-Chinese School (Barker Road) formed a C Division table tennis team only a fortnight before the competition, but defied the odds to earn a zonal bronze. For that feat, the team are given The Straits Times Young Star of the Month award. SPORT C13

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VIDEO
What Jacky Wu wants
Taiwanese entertainer Jacky Wu has numerous albums, variety shows and businesses under his belt. However, the veteran host says he has spent too much of his life just working and earning money. http://str.sg/jacky



VIDEO
Unwanted 'extras' in food
A customer in Bangkok recently found a fried lizard in a packet of Irvins Salted Egg Fish Skin snack. Here are other cases where consumers have found unwanted surprises in their food. http://str.sg/yucks

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Red Dot Power exits electricity market in S'pore

It cites financially challenging period as reason for pulling plug

Cheryl Teh

Red Dot Power has pulled out of the electricity market, saying yesterday that it has been a "financially challenging period" for the firm.

The company was part of the initial soft launch for the open electricity market (OEM) in Jurong, signing up around 3,000 customers, including 120 households.

When the open market roll-out to other parts of the island began on Nov 1, Red Dot Power decided not to sign up new customers as it evaluated its business.

Now, it has decided to exit the OEM, and its customers' electricity accounts will be transferred back to the SP Group on Monday.

Its departure leaves 22 electricity retailers in Singapore, of which 13 will continue to participate in the OEM's nationwide launch.

"We are working closely with Red Dot Power to ensure a smooth transfer of its customers, mostly commercial and industrial consumers, to SP Group as part of the standard process for retailers who are exiting the business," said a spokesman for the Energy Market Authority (EMA).

Red Dot Power was one of 13 retailers which took part in the pilot in April last year of the OEM in Jurong. Experts believe it fell victim to a price war among retailers, which are offering big discounts and attractive freebies to get customers to switch from SP Group.

In September, Red Dot Power was offering residential plans of 19.08 cents per kwh, while some retailers were offering as low as around 17 cents. Red Dot's customer base of 3,000 to date is below the 10,000 some retailers have secured.

3,000

Number of residential and business customers affected.

Professor Subodh Gautam Mhaisalkar, executive director of the Energy Research Institute at the Nanyang Technological University, believes Red Dot's exit is likely to be part of a process of consolidation in the market.

He said: "Being an electricity retailer is still a long-term viable business opportunity for companies, and with multiple companies also in the business, one company bowing out does not raise a red flag."

Yesterday's announcement surprised some customers.

Ms Daphne Koh, 26, whose family of three in Jurong has a subscription plan with Red Dot, said: "I don't appreciate that the services were halted so quickly. I hope the prices other retailers provide won't be far beyond what we pay now."

Red Dot has assured customers that their power supply will not be disrupted. "We are working closely with the EMA and SP Group to ensure a smooth transfer," said its chief executive Vijay Sirse.

He also assured customers they would not be required to pay any early contract termination charges.

Customers with security deposits held by Red Dot will have the money used to offset their latest electricity bill. The remaining sum will be refunded no later than one month from the date of the final invoice.

The EMA spokesman said that several safeguards are in place when selecting retailers to participate in the OEM. "Even if a customer's retailer exits the business, their electricity supply will not be disrupted and their security deposits will be protected by business insurance or banker's guarantee."

The OEM was conceptualised as a way to enable households and businesses to buy electricity produced by power plants through a retailer with a price plan that best meets their needs.

EMA said about 30 per cent of residents in the areas where the OEM is under way have switched to retailers other than SP Group.

tienli@sph.com.sg



Electricity poles were felled by strong winds along a road yesterday as Pabuk – Thailand's first tropical storm in three decades – approached the country's southern province of Nakhon Si Thammarat. PHOTO: REUTERS

Thousands on Thai party islands hunker down for storm

NAKHON SI THAMMARAT (Thailand) • This time of year, the resorts and beaches of Thai islands Koh Samui, Koh Phangan and Koh Tao are packed with thousands of holidaymakers and revellers from around the world enjoying the New Year holiday break.

The islands are among Thailand's most popular destinations and key earners for the country's lucrative tourism trade.

Yesterday, the beaches were empty as Tropical Storm Pabuk lashed the area with heavy rain and pounding surf, triggering blackouts. Thousands of tourists and residents fled before the storm's arrival, while those marooned hunkered down to wait out Thailand's first tropical storm in three decades as it struck during the peak holiday season.

"Ten thousand tourists are still on Koh Phangan," said Mr Krikkrai Songthanee, district chief of the island which neighbours Samui and is famed for its full-moon parties.

"But I talked to foreigners last night and they are not scared, they understand the situation," he told Agence France-Presse (AFP).

Meteorologists said Pabuk made landfall in southern Thailand yesterday afternoon, sparing the tourist islands to the north from a direct hit.

"But all tourist islands in the Gulf of Thailand, including Koh Samui, Koh Phangan, Koh Tao, will be affected because Pabuk is huge," said Mr Phuwieng Prakhammintara, head of the Thai Meteorological Department.

Tens of thousands of tourists have already fled the southern zone.

"It is very empty... The beaches are deserted," Koh Phangan resident Pui Suriwan told AFP.



Huge waves crashing into a pier in the southern Thai province of Surat Thani yesterday as Pabuk lashed the area. PHOTO: AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE



A house is left partially submerged in flood waters in Pak Phanang district in Nakhon Si Thammarat province yesterday. PHOTO: EPA-EFE



Foreign tourists were left stranded at the airport late on Thursday as their flights to leave Koh Samui were cancelled following a weather warning on Tropical Storm Pabuk. About 20,000 tourists were staying on the Thai island, its district chief Kittipop Roddon said yesterday. PHOTO: EPA-EFE



SOURCE: AFP STRAITS TIMES GRAPHICS

On neighbouring Koh Tao, one of South-east Asia's most popular dive spots, tourists and residents were bracing themselves for a torrid 24 hours. "I have finished buying supplies... There is no gas anywhere on the island, 7-Eleven is already running out of things," a Spanish dive instructor told AFP.

"We are ready to hunker down."

Holidaymakers on Koh Samui, whose airport was shut yesterday, shared videos on Twitter of waves licking the steps to beachside bungalows as the wind speeds picked up.

"It is quite scary being here because we don't know what is going to happen and there is no way to leave," American tourist Miranda Abidyer, 26, who is stranded on Koh Samui, told CNN.

Ms Abidyer, who travelled to the island with her young family to celebrate her husband's 30th birthday, said they had a flight scheduled for yesterday but it was cancelled, and ferry services have also been suspended. She said they had not received any information from the local authorities about the storm or what they should do. They said they would wait out the storm in their private villa, which is about 1km from the beach.

"We will hide in the bathroom if the storm gets that bad. But all we can do is wait," said Ms Abidyer.

The district chief of Koh Samui, Mr Kittipop Roddon, told CNN by phone yesterday that there were about 20,000 tourists staying on the island, which is the second-largest in Thailand.

"The island is now totally cut off from the mainland, all kinds of transportation (to the mainland) have been suspended since yesterday," he said, adding that there is enough food and supplies on Koh Samui to last through the storm.

The storm is forecast to weaken as it crosses over from the Gulf of Thailand to the Andaman Sea, but tourists have been warned to be prepared for heavy rain, rough seas and landslides.

In 1989, Typhoon Gay killed hundreds in southern Thailand. The storm swept in from the Gulf of Thailand, crossed into the Andaman Sea, then struck eastern India several days later.

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Asian markets cheer China stimulus, Sino-US trade talks

Bourses rebound as traders snap up bargains after recent sell-offs

Grace Leong
Business Correspondent

What a difference a day makes: Regional markets enjoyed a shot of new year cheer yesterday after three grim trading sessions, thanks to China's fiscal stimulus and news that the world's two biggest economies will meet next week for trade talks.

There was little talk of Apple's revenue warning that panicked investors on Thursday.

Instead, it was a case of accentuating the positive as traders across the region homed in on bargains following brutal sell-offs in recent weeks. Shares in Hong Kong, Shanghai and Shenzhen were up by more than 2 per cent yesterday, in part due to pledges by Chinese officials that the government will step up its support for the economy.

The rally was evident here too, with the Straits Times Index up 1.54 per cent, while Korea, Thailand and Jakarta all rose about 0.8 per cent.

CMC Markets analyst Margaret Yang said: "The Straits Times Index exhibited resilience against the US sell-off on Thursday, as higher crude prices and hopes of more China stimulus boosted sentiment. Offshore and marine, banks, commodity, industrial sectors outperformed."

Banks set the pace: United Overseas Bank jumped 1.6 per cent, OCBC Bank rose 1.3 per cent and DBS gained 0.9 per cent.

Other standouts included Keppel Corp, which rallied 2.2 per cent, and Genting Singapore, ahead 2.1 per cent.

But DBS Bank head of research (Singapore equities) Janice Chua expects that the first quarter will continue to "pose challenges, with downgrades in GDP (gross domestic product) growth and corporate earnings cuts working their way through the final results of the last financial year".

Another wild card is whether the US Federal Reserve will be more cautious about further interest rate hikes, given signs that America's economic growth may be moderating.

European and US futures climbed yesterday on efforts to end a partial government shutdown. Investors were buoyed also by news that the United States and China are preparing to resume talks on Monday amid signs that US businesses are feeling the pinch of the trade war.

But it was not all good news. Japan slumped 2.26 per cent on its first trading day of the year on a much stronger yen and as investors there caught up with negative news.

Pressure on Apple suppliers continued to hit Taiwan's stock market, which fell further yesterday, down 1.16 per cent.

Still, sentiment improved partly on hopes of more China stimulus. The government will cut banks' reserve requirement ratios, taxes and fees as it seeks to reduce the risk of a sharper slowdown this year.

China slashed reserve requirements four times last year to free up more funds for banks to lend, and analysts expect three to four more cuts this year, starting this quarter.

CIMB economist Song Seng Wun noted that the cuts came earlier than expected, following more signs that the Chinese economy is slowing faster than expected.

"China's moves are cushioning the fall in markets," he said. "Will they be injecting more stimulus? Yes, because this year is the 70th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China. They won't want to be celebrating against a backdrop of doom and gloom."

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SEE WORLD A16, BUSINESS C4



Luxury stocks feel bite of Apple's sales revision



Apple, whose products include the iPhone XR, cut its quarterly revenue outlook to US$84 billion (S$114 billion), from as much as US$93 billion, blaming it in part on a pullback in demand within China. That set off alarm bells throughout the luxury-goods industry, which includes the Louis Vuitton label. PHOTOS: EPA-EFE, REUTERS

HONG KONG • After Apple's shock profit warning, investors were quick to make the connection: If Chinese consumers are cutting back on iPhones, Louis Vuitton handbags could be next.

Apple's sales revision cascaded through global markets, hitting suppliers and rivals, but also a raft of luxury-goods companies that rely on the same clientele who like to splurge on Apple's latest products.

Shares of Gucci parent Kering, LVMH Moet Hennessy Louis Vuitton, Burberry Group and Richemont, the parent of jeweller Cartier, all declined in the wake of Apple's shortfall.

"It is going to become significantly more challenging to do well in China because the market is tightening up," said Mr David Roth, chief executive of WPP's The Store global retail practice. "This is a challenging signal that people need to button down and understand China better and prepare."

Apple cut its quarterly revenue outlook to US$84 billion (S$114 billion), from as much as US$93 billion, blaming it in part on a pullback in demand within China.

That set off warning bells throughout the luxury industry because Chinese consumers account for about 30 per cent of the US$1 trillion in luxury-goods spending worldwide, according to Euromonitor International.

Prada shares fell as much as 3.6 per cent in Hong Kong yesterday. In Europe on Thursday, Kering fell 5.5 per cent, the most since October, while LVMH dropped 3.8 per cent and Burberry tumbled 5.9 per cent.

For years, companies from LVMH to Tiffany & Co have targeted China's wealthy tourists, who sought out pricey handbags, jewellery and other luxury items while on vacation in Paris to Dubai.

Investors are worried that the sliding yuan, China's trade war-hit economy and a government crackdown on overseas purchases could dent demand.

Richemont, whose shares fell by 2.8 per cent on Thursday, has already been feeling the heat. The Swiss watch and jewellery-goods maker signalled in November that Chinese sales growth has slowed. Others have maintained a more bullish tone, with LVMH and Kering citing robust China sales in October and saying that they welcome a shift to domestic sales.

A key test for retailers will come with the week-long Chinese New Year holiday, which begins on Feb 5.

About two-thirds of those sales take place outside the country as tourists open their wallets while travelling abroad, taking advantage of better selection and cheaper prices than available at home.

But with the US trade war weighing on China's stocks and currency, and President Xi Jinping's government trying to bolster a faltering economy, more mainlanders are choosing to do their shopping inside China rather than on overseas trips.

"There is clearly a shift that has started to happen in the consumption pattern: Chinese people are buying more in China," said Mr Pascal Martin, a partner in Hong Kong with OC&C Strategy Consultants.

Taxes on imported clothing, which had been as high as 25 per cent, are now just 7.1 per cent.

Companies are scrambling to adjust, opening more stores in China or partnering local online outlets such as Alibaba Group Holding's Tmall.

Ermenegildo Zegna, which has stores in 35 Chinese cities, last month opened a flagship store on Tmall Luxury Pavilion, following a similar move by Italian fashion house Valentino in November.

"Luxury brands still benefit from a formidable capacity to recruit new consumers in China," HSBC analysts led by Mr Erwan Rambourg said in a note. BLOOMBERG

SEE OPINION A34

Budget 2019 could focus on SMEs: Analysts

Adrian Lim
Political Correspondent

As Singapore presses on with economic transformation, the Government can be expected to further nudge small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to innovate and seek opportunities abroad, said observers yesterday, ahead of next month's Budget statement.

And in the face of technological disruption, the Government will also continue to prioritise helping affected professionals, managers, executives and technicians (PMETs) find new careers, they added.

The observers were responding to Finance Minister Heng Swee Keat's recent comments on the Budget statement, which he will deliver on Feb 18.

In a Facebook posting on Thursday, Mr Heng said: "Given the uncertainties in the global economy and rapid technological advancements, we must continue to innovate and transform our economy."

At the same time, Singaporeans must be equipped with relevant skills, so the country can progress together, the minister added. He invited all Singaporeans to share their views and suggestions for Budget 2019.

CIMB Private Banking economist Song Seng Wun said the thrust of Budget presentations over the past years has been consistent, with the focus on how businesses need to stay relevant and upgrading the labour force. "But the external environment has become more challenging – trade war, geopolitical risks and a slowing growth momentum. The Government needs to watch over the economic transformation taking place against a backdrop of slower growth," Mr Song added.

Singapore's economy grew steadily at 3.3 per cent last year. It is estimated that the economy could grow between 1.5 per cent and 3.5 per cent this year.

DBS Bank economist Irvin Seah said he sees positive prospects in the region in the medium and long term, with strong foreign direct investment inflows expected. "With the trade war between China and the US, there will be a rebalancing in the world economy. Chinese and global companies are also diversifying, and Asean countries will be an attractive option for them," Mr Seah said.

In the manufacturing sector, for example, Singapore's SMEs play more of a supporting role to multinational corporations (MNCs), and they need to beef up their capabilities and venture abroad to tap new MNC customers in the region, he added.

Mr Seah said schemes such as the Enterprise Development Grant, which helps firms to upgrade, innovate or venture overseas, can be strengthened.

"The grant could be tweaked to give more support to smaller firms or to fast-track the applications by companies which are in high-growth sectors, such as aerospace," Mr Seah said.

MP Liang Eng Hwa, chairman of the Government Parliamentary Committee for Finance and Trade and Industry, said more resources are needed to help Singaporeans whose jobs have been disrupted, and who are in mid-career transition.

While schemes to help PMETs have worked, and their unemployment rate has remained largely constant, an economic downturn can result in more retrenchments, said Mr Song. The Government will need to be mindful of this, he added.

Mr Seah said the Government has implemented some measures, such as the Professional Conversion Programmes, but the level of support provided so far has been fairly conservative.

"More robust measures may be needed, such as providing more salary support and educating employers to be more receptive to hiring these career-switching PMETs," he said.

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INNOVATION NEEDED

Given the uncertainties in the global economy and rapid technological advancements, we must continue to innovate and transform our economy.

FINANCE MINISTER HENG SWEE KEAT

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Four S'pore pioneers join Raffles in bicentennial project



Above: A team from Hong Hai Environmental Art unwrapping the statue of Munshi Abdullah. The four new statues were officially unveiled yesterday.

Left: Restoration work being done on the statue of Raffles. ST PHOTOS: LIM YAOHUI

Statues of Sang Nila Utama, Tan Tock Seng, Munshi Abdullah and Naraina Pillai erected

Melody Zaccheus
Heritage and Community Correspondent

Having stood alone since 1969, the iconic statue of Stamford Raffles by the Singapore River now has four new companions to present a more holistic picture of the island's history.

The statues of Sang Nila Utama, Tan Tock Seng, Munshi Abdullah and Naraina Pillai were installed on Thursday in a project commissioned by the Singapore Bicentennial Office. They were officially unveiled yesterday.

The new statues are made of fibreglass and perched on plinths. They centre on the theme of a cast of characters from diverse backgrounds arriving in Singapore to build a nation.

Apart from Sang Nila Utama, the Palembang prince who first saw a vision of a lion and established the kingdom of Singapura in 1299, Tan, Munshi and Naraina were among the first settlers to arrive here in 1819.

Tan Tock Seng was a merchant, philanthropist and community leader who contributed to starting a hospital that was named after him.

Munshi was Raffles' secretary, interpreter and Malay tutor who documented aspects of Singapore life after Raffles landed and is regarded as the founder of modern Malay literature.

Naraina was chief clerk at the treasury and a local leader of the Indian community.

It took a team from Hong Hai Environmental Art, including artist Teng Kai Wei, 32, four months to conceptualise and fabricate the fibreglass statues, which will be moved to different sites along the Singapore River from Wednesday.

The Bicentennial Office said the statues "were fabricated to last for only one year" and will be removed by the end of the year. It declined to reveal the project's budget.

The statues follow the art event on Dec 29 where the white, polymarble Raffles statue was half covered in dark grey paint to create an optical illusion that it had blended into the buildings in the Central Business District. On Wednesday, the Singapore Bicentennial Office revealed the effect was created with outdoor acrylic paint in collaboration with Mr Teng.

On Dec 7 last year, the Singapore Tourism Board had issued a notice that the Raffles' statue would be undergoing maintenance works and hoarded up from Dec 10 to 28.

Organisers of the bicentennial have said that although the yearlong calendar of activities commemorates 200 years since Raffles' landing, it is also an occasion to mark the contributions of a range of pioneers and early settlers, as well as to recognise Singapore's much longer history as a settlement that dates back more than 700 years.

CONTRIBUTIONS OF MANY

The four statues represent only a fraction of the huge cast of characters who contributed to the evolution of Singapore in our longer history of 700 years.

MR GENE TAN, executive director of the Singapore Bicentennial Office.

Mr Gene Tan, executive director of the Singapore Bicentennial Office, said that while most might associate the bicentennial with only the British and 1819, the four additional statues clearly articulate the approach they are taking for the yearlong effort. He said: "1819 is an important point in our history, but before and after the British also came many people and communities. Even the four statues represent only a fraction of the huge cast of characters who contributed to the evolution of Singapore in our longer history of 700 years."

Reactions online to the unveiling ranged from excitement at the expanded cast of characters to criticism on why significant individuals such as local chieftain Temenggong Abdul Rahman and William Farquhar, the first British resident and commandant of Singapore who turned Raffles' vision for the island into reality, were excluded.

To this, the Bicentennial Office said on its Facebook page that other significant characters in Singapore's history will be spotlighted throughout the year.

Mr Kwa Chong Guan, a senior fellow at the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, noted that different groups of men and women came to Singapore through trading networks, similar to other port cities such as Melaka in the 15th century and Venice in the 16th century. These people contributed to its success as a port city.

In 19th century Singapore, the traditional networks of trade involved Bugis, Malay, Arab and Indian traders as well as Fujian merchants and Europeans, he noted.

Associate Professor Hadijah Rahmat, head of Asian languages and cultures at the National Institute of Education, said Singapore was not built by a single visionary man but by "a multiracial, multi-cultural, multi-religious people with richly diverse backgrounds and their human strengths".

melodyz@sph.com.sg

SEE FORUM B8

SCAN TO WATCH Statues of Raffles and friends. http://str.sg/statues

Key figures in S'pore's history

SANG NILA UTAMA

Sang Nila Utama was a Palembang prince from the Srivijaya ruling house, according to the Sejarah Melayu, or Malay Annals. He is said to have been attracted by the beauty of the white sands on the island of Temasek, landing on its shores in 1299.

The story goes that he had a vision of an animal with a red body, black head and white breast, which he took to be a lion. This good omen led him to establish the kingdom of Singapura, or the Lion City.

Archaeologists have found white sand at the Padang, which is believed to be the same sand that first captivated Sang Nila Utama.

TAN TOCK SENG

Tan Tock Seng, one of Singapore's most renowned philanthropists and pioneers, arrived here in 1819 from Melaka at the age of 21.

Tan started out as a small-business owner, and later became a wealthy merchant who owned properties stretching from the Padang to High Street and Tank Road.

He funded essential public services, including the Chinese Pauper Hospital – the predecessor of today's Tan Tock Seng Hospital. He also rallied other business owners to contribute money for the hospital.

He also became Singapore's first Asian Justice of Peace, and was the biggest donor towards building Thian Hock Keng Temple in Telok Ayer Street.

MUNSHI ABDULLAH

Known as the father of modern Malay literature here, Munshi Abdullah was born in Malacca in 1797 and arrived in 1819 in Singapore, where he worked as secretary and interpreter for Stamford Raffles.

A gifted linguist who mastered Arabic, Tamil, Hindi and Malay, Munshi taught Malay to British and American missionaries. He was the first Malay author to introduce a shortened and more colloquial version of the language in place of classical Malay.

In 1849, his autobiographical book Hikayat Abdullah (The Story Of Abdullah) became one of the first commercially published Malay literary texts. The book offered a unique perspective on the political and cultural developments of the time.

NARAINA PILLAI

Naraina Pillai was a successful entrepreneur and regarded as the de facto leader of the Indian community.

He arrived in Singapore in 1819 from Penang, and became chief clerk at the treasury department, then developed Singapore's first brick company and became the country's first building contractor.

He also traded cotton goods, and his store in Cross Street quickly became the largest cotton business in town.

He was pivotal in the construction of Sri Mariamman Temple, the first Hindu temple in Singapore. It was built in 1827 and served as a shelter for Indian immigrants before they found accommodation.

Linette Lai

THE SUNDAY TIMES

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What to queue for this year?

From muffin-shaped croissants to truffle chips, Life picks the food trends for 2019







Lunch With Sumiko

People person

Lee Tzu Yang, the chairman of the Public Service Commission, on looking beyond academic grades in choosing the right scholarship recipients



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Briton Christopher David Burge (right) is accused of attempting to possess five packets of a crystalline substance between Sept 14 and 19 last year. They were later found to contain at least 3.6g of methamphetamine. The humanities tutor is also accused of consuming the drug on Sept 20 last year.



ST PHOTO: WONG KWAI CHOW

Teacher faces drug-related charges

Hwa Chong Institution humanities tutor accused of attempting to possess, consuming methamphetamine

Shaffiq Alkhatib

A Hwa Chong Institution (HCI) teacher appeared in court yesterday to face drug-related charges, including methamphetamine consumption.

Briton Christopher David Burge, 65, was first charged on Sept 22 last year.

He is accused of attempting to possess five packets of a crystalline substance between Sept 14 and 19 last year. They were later found to contain at least 3.6g of methamphetamine.

The humanities tutor is also accused of consuming the drug on Sept 20 last year.

He was allegedly found with drug paraphernalia, including glass apparatus with a straw and a pipe attached, in Linden Drive near Eng Neo Avenue at around 11.20pm that day.

Burge is also said to have in his possession at least 6.12g of a vegetable matter which was analysed and found to contain 5-Fluoro-MDMB-PINACA – a substance found in synthetic cannabinoids.

Yesterday, the court heard that it will take four more weeks to prepare Burge's medical report.

Burge is out on bail of $10,000 and will be back in court on Feb 1.

Responding to queries from The Straits Times yesterday, HCI said that Burge has been suspended since September last year.

"As the matter is before the courts, we are unable to provide further details," a school spokesman added.

Offenders convicted of methamphetamine consumption can be jailed for up to 10 years and fined up to $20,000.

Those convicted of being in possession of drug paraphernalia can be jailed for up to three years and fined up to $10,000.

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WORLD



NANCY PELOSI
VETERAN DEMOCRATIC LAWMAKER'S 2ND STINT AS HOUSE SPEAKER **A28**

Mindanao blast payback for killing of militants?



Police gathering evidence outside a shopping mall in Cotabato city, southern Philippines, where an explosion took place on New Year's Eve. A Philippine military official says the attack was probably in retaliation for the deaths of four militants in clashes with security forces last month.
PHOTO: EPA-EFE

Manila official says deaths of S'porean fighter and three others likely sparked bombing

Raul Dancel
Philippines Correspondent
In Manila

A Singaporean militant was killed in clashes last month that intelligence officials here believe may have led to a deadly bombing in the war-torn southern Philippine island of Mindanao.

A senior military official has identified the man as Abu Hud Zain, a Singaporean. It was not clear whether this was his real name or an alias.

Investigators have yet to recover his passport or any documents to confirm his identity, according to the official, who asked not to be named because of the nature of the information he was sharing.

Zain was killed in covert operations by security forces in Mamasapano town, Maguindanao province, on Dec 22.

Also killed were an Indonesian, Abdulrahid Ruhmisanti, and brothers Salamuddin and Mohammad Hassan, both Filipinos.

This happened about a week before a bomb went off in front of a mall in Cotabato city on Monday, killing two and wounding dozens.

Major-General Cirilito Sobejana, chief of the 6th Infantry Division, told reporters that the attack was probably in retaliation for the deaths of the four militants.

It is believed Zain was part of the Muhajireen Wal-Ansar, also known as the Maguindanao Daulah Islamiyah. It is a faction of the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (Biff) under the firebrand preacher Esmael Abdulmalik, also known as Abu Turaife.

Biff is a splinter group of the 12,000-strong Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), the main secessionist group that has been holding peace talks with the government.

Intelligence officials said the Turaife group, consisting of about 150 militants, had been roaming a sprawling marshland from North Cotabato province to Maguindanao.

Zain was the second Singaporean extremist known to be fighting in the Philippines after Abdullah Ali, alias Muawiyah, whose fate is unknown. Zain's death highlights the presence of foreign terrorists in the battlegrounds of southern Philippines, an issue that has worried regional governments.

It has been providing shelter to fighters for the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) across South-east Asia, the Middle East and North Africa, they said.

Zain was the second Singaporean extremist known to be fighting in the Philippines, after Abdullah Ali, alias Muawiyah, whose fate is unknown. Zain's death highlights the presence of foreign terrorists in the battlegrounds of the southern Philippines, an issue that worries regional governments as Indonesians and Malaysians are known to be involved. A major security concern is that these militants would one day bring their battlefield experience home to sow chaos.

Over a thousand militants aligned with ISIS stormed and laid siege to the southern Islamic city of Marawi in May 2017, sparking five months of intense fighting and military airstrikes that left more than 1,100 people – mostly militants – dead and displaced hundreds of thousands of villagers.

Philippine security officials have said remnants of the militant groups behind the siege have fled to remote areas where Biff has been operating freely.

Maj-Gen Sobejana said the bombing in Cotabato could also be intended to derail a plebiscite set for this month to ratify a long-awaited law to allow minority Muslims in Mindanao to start moving towards self-rule by 2022.

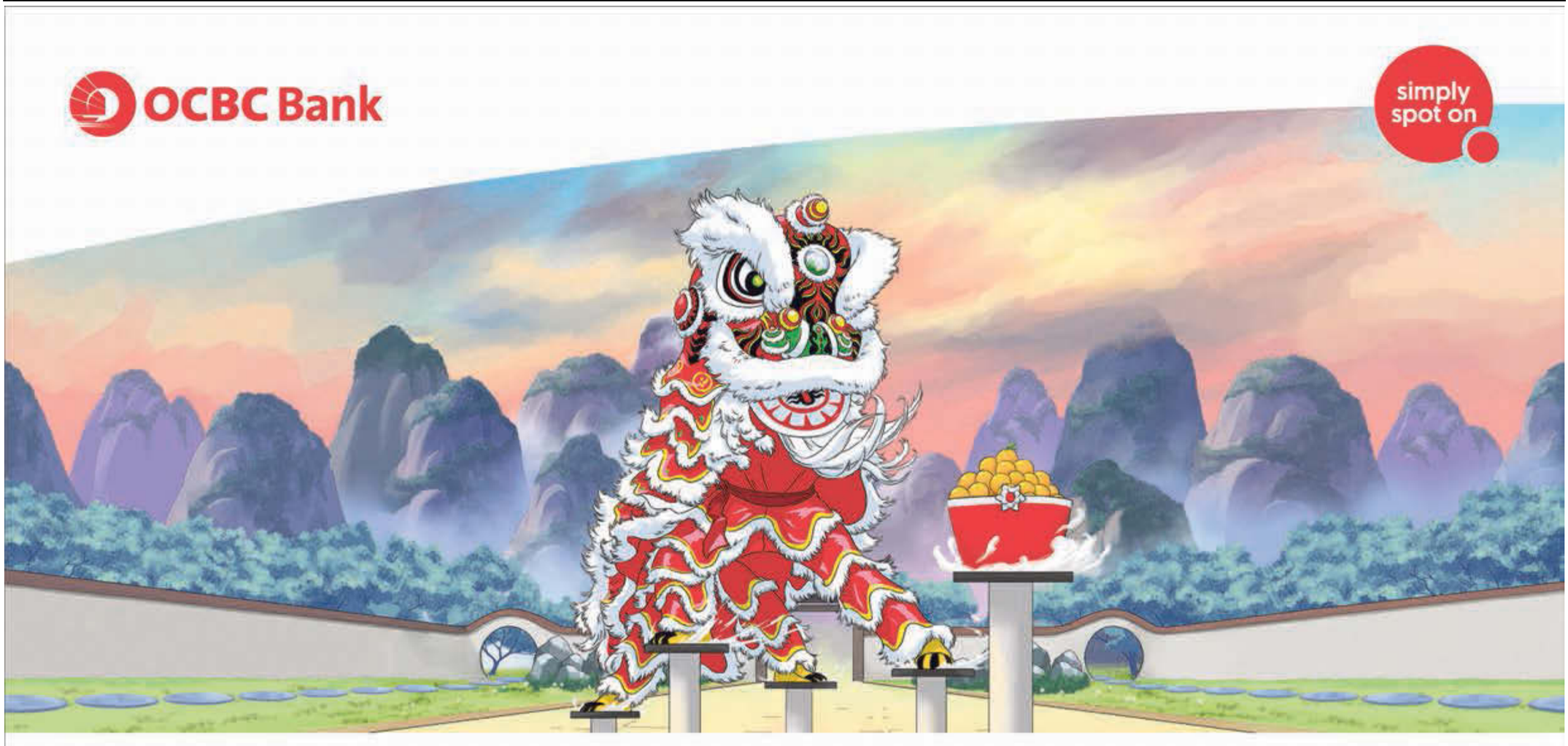
The Bangsamoro Organic Law is the culmination of a lengthy and rocky peace accord with the MILF. But the militants are opposed to it, insisting instead on carving out an ISIS "province" in Mindanao.

"There is a strong indication that the attack is, in a way, political in nature," said Ms Sidney Jones, director of the Jakarta-based Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict, and an expert on terrorism in South-east Asia.

But Ms Jones believes the blast may have been meant to send a message to the Sayadi family, who are in power in Cotabato city.

Mayor Cynthia Guiani-Sayadi has predicted that Cotabato city will likely reject the Bangsamoro law.

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Jakarta's 'worrying' haul of militants

Record number of suspects put out of action shows extent of terror network

Wahyudi Soeriaatmadja
Indonesia Correspondent
In Jakarta

There was good as well as bad news on the counter-terrorism front for Indonesian police last year.

A record number of terror suspects was put out of action, indicating the police's success in foiling possible attacks.

But the spike has led observers to warn about the extent of the problem Indonesia faces in dealing with militancy and terrorism.

Figures from the police showed that last year, the anti-terror unit Detachment 88 put 396 militants out of action, a sharp jump from the 176 in 2017.

Twenty-five suspects were gunned down during raids last year as they resisted arrests, nine more than in 2017.

"The extraordinary number of arrests reveals how vast their network is. This is more worrying than a small number of arrests," said counter-terrorism researcher Ulta Levenia of the Jakarta-based Centre of Terrorism and Radicalism Studies (CTRS).

In many less-urgent cases, police have had to hold off arresting the suspects because of prosecution backlogs and overcrowded prisons unable to accommodate a huge influx of militants, Ms Ulta told The Straits Times.

Police, however, have continued to put those suspects still at large under close surveillance.

Terrorist inmates require specially trained correctional officers and maximum security facilities, Ms Ulta explained, adding that such proper and ideal conditions exist only in some prisons, including the Nusakambangan, the Alcatraz-like island prison in Central Java, and the detention centre at the headquarters of the police mobile brigade outside Jakarta.

Terrorism continued to figure prominently in the national discourse in Indonesia last year as the country hosted two major international events and suffered several terror attacks which eventually led to the introduction of a new and more stringent anti-terror law.

Tough security measures were adopted for the annual meetings of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank Group in Bali last October.

The 2018 Asian Games were held in two cities, Jakarta and Palembang, from Aug 18 to Sept 2.

No incidents were reported for all the events.

But in May last year, 12 people were killed after militants staged coordinated suicide bombings of three churches in Surabaya, East Java. These were followed by several other attacks, including on the police in Surabaya and in Pekanbaru, the capital of Riau province.

The attacks provided the impetus for deliberations in Parliament on a new anti-terror Bill which the government had proposed in 2016. Eleven days after church bombings in Surabaya, on May 25, Parliament approved the legislation, which, among other things, allowed police to make pre-emptive arrests and to detain terror suspects for longer based only on preliminary leads.

"The new law allows police to net those even with only intention to commit a terror act," said Ms Ulta of the CTRS.

Initiated by Indonesia's national police chief, General Tito Karnavian, and also headed by him currently, CTRS was established in June last year. It is part of the Police Higher Education College (PTIK) in South Jakarta.

Anti-terror expert Adhe Bhakti of the Centre for Radicalism and Deradicalisation Studies (Pakar), like most analysts, believes the new anti-terror law that allowed police to take a more pre-emptive approach has led to more arrests.

As a follow-up to the new law, a court in late July banned Jemaah Ansharut Daulah (JAD), Indonesia's most active militant network responsible for several terror attacks in the recent years, along with groups linked to the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS). JAD has also pledged allegiance to ISIS.

"Since then, police could arrest any member of JAD even though he or she had not done or planned a terror act. Previously, just being a member of such an organisation was not enough grounds for arrest," Mr Adhe told The Straits Times.

Anyone issuing a terror threat on social media can also now be arrested, Mr Adhe said, citing the example of a case in Tarakan, North Kalimantan province, where a 22-year-old man was arrested on May 17 after he uploaded a video of himself on YouTube with a knife, a pistol and live bullets, declaring that he would use them against those who have spoken falsely about ISIS.

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396

Number of militants put out of action by Indonesia's police anti-terror unit Detachment 88 last year.

25

Terror suspects gunned down during raids last year.

The Indonesian police's anti-terror unit Detachment 88 conducting a raid in Tangerang last May. A new anti-terror law passed last year allows police to make pre-emptive arrests, among other things.
PHOTO: AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

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A Chinese worker at a port in Qingdao, China. President Donald Trump and President Xi Jinping agreed to a 90-day truce in the US-China trade war after a meeting in Argentina last month. PHOTO: AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

China, US to hold trade talks next week

Meeting will be first face-to-face one since Trump, Xi agreed on 90-day truce last month

BEIJING • China said a US delegation will visit next week for trade talks, confirming that the two sides will have their first face-to-face negotiation since President Donald Trump and his counterpart, President Xi Jinping, agreed to a 90-day truce in their trade war last month.

Deputy US Trade Representative Jeffrey Gerrish will lead the US delegation for the talks on Monday and Tuesday, the Commerce Ministry said in a statement. Vice-ministers from the two countries talked on the phone yesterday, and will discuss how to implement the consensus reached in Argentina when the two leaders meet in Beijing, it said.

The talks add to signs that the world's two largest economies are looking for a way to cool trade tensions. The S&P 500 Index tumbled 2.5 per cent on Thursday amid mounting indications that US business is starting to feel the pinch from the trade war. Apple plunged the most since 2013 in part due to slowing iPhone sales in China, where the economy has slowed.

"The negotiations next week are important because they will establish expectations, but we shouldn't expect major breakthroughs," said Mr Myron Brilliant, vice-president of international affairs at the US Chamber of Commerce.

The talks will be divided into groups dealing with non-tariff measures, intellectual property, agriculture and industrial purchases, people familiar with the matter said.

Other administration officials at the talks will include Mr Gregg Doud, the US Trade Representative's chief agricultural negotiator, and Mr David Malpass, the Treasury Department's Undersecretary for International Affairs, said the sources.

US Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer is expected to meet Chinese Vice-Premier Liu He, President Xi's top economic adviser, later this month, a source said.

Chinese officials have been in constant contact with the US to try to determine what else is needed to move things forward, those familiar with the talks said separately last month. It appears to them that the US itself is not clear on what it wants, said the sources.

Those familiar said other US attendees include Mr Gil Kaplan, Undersecretary of Commerce for International Trade; Mr Ted McKinney, Undersecretary of Agriculture for Trade and Foreign Agricultural Affairs; and Ms Merry Lin, director for global and Asia economics at the National Security Council.

Mr Trump reported "big progress" in trade negotiations after a phone call with Mr Xi last week. Beijing also announced a third round of tariff cuts, lowering import taxes on more than 700 goods from Jan 1 as part of its efforts to open up the economy and lower costs for domestic consumers.

After meeting Mr Xi on Dec 1, Mr Trump agreed to put on hold a scheduled increase in tariffs on US$200 billion (S$272 billion) in annual imports from China for 90 days while the negotiations take place. In response, China temporarily lowered tariffs on US car imports for the same period. BLOOMBERG

No official word on Malaysian King abdicating

KUALA LUMPUR • Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad said he has not received any official confirmation or indication on rumours that the Malaysian King, Sultan Muhammad V, 49, would be stepping down.

When asked by reporters if the King had returned to work after going on leave for two months up to Dec 31, Tun Dr Mahathir said: "As far as I know." The Premier was speaking to reporters yesterday after chairing the Pakatan Harapan presidential council meeting.

Asked if the Conference of Rulers could appoint an acting king for the current term, Dr Mahathir replied that this was up to the rulers to decide. The conference groups the nine sultans of the royal Malay houses and four state governors.

Perak's Sultan Nazrin Shah was the acting king during Sultan Muhammad V's absence.

The current king is from Kelantan state. He was proclaimed Malaysia's 15th king in December 2016.

The sultans take turns to be appointed constitutional monarch every five years.

Rumours that Sultan Muhammad V would abdicate soon have been circulating on social media.

On Thursday, Kelantan Deputy Menteri Besar Mohd Amar Nik Abdullah tried to tamp down the speculation, telling the public not to believe in rumours.

Datuk Amar asked the Attorney-General's Chambers to clamp down on what he said was fake news.

The New Straits Times reported yesterday that an unscheduled meeting among the Malay rulers took place on Wednesday night.

In late November, media reports said Sultan Muhammad V had married a beauty queen from Russia, Ms Oksana Voevodina, in Moscow.

The national palace Istana Negara, however, has not confirmed or denied the reports.

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Commentary

Bright side of landing on dark side of Moon?

It would be better for mankind if US and China could cooperate in space exploration



Goh Sui Noi

East Asia Editor

There was great joy and pride among the Chinese as the Chang'e-4 lunar probe scored a world first by landing successfully on the far side of the Moon.

It was all the more gratifying as Thursday's soft landing was a difficult feat fraught with risks. The United States, in its final lunar mission in 1972, decided against this because of the difficulties.

But already, there are questions about China's motivation in deciding to land on the dark side, with some suggesting it may have a darker purpose – of targeting the US' space-based assets such as its strategic surveillance platforms.

The challenge of landing on the far side of the Moon is that it never faces Earth, meaning the spacecraft attempting the landing will have no direct line of sight to Earth. Therefore, a satellite needs to be put in place beyond the Moon to relay communications between the spacecraft and its tracking stations on earth.

The Chinese launched such a satellite, Queqiao or Magpie Bridge, last May in preparation for Chang'e-4's landing.

This satellite poses concerns in the US, with Mr Jeff Gossel, the top intelligence engineer with the US Air Force's National Air and Space Intelligence Centre's Space and Missile Analysis Group, warning last October that its could be used to support anti-satellite weapons.

"You could fly some sort of weapon around the Moon and it comes back" to hit satellites in orbit round Earth and "we would never know because there is nothing watching in that direction", he told an Air Force Association gathering.

Writing on @thewarzonewire website, freelance journalist Joseph Trevithick suggested that the Chang'e-4 mission could "presage an all-new front in the steadily evolving nature of military activities in space".

Professor Emeritus John Logsdon of the Space Policy Institute at George Washington University said in an e-mail interview that Chang'e-4 is a step in a long-planned programme of robotic lunar exploration that is not closely connected to China's national security space programme.

Its space programme has "a variety of motivations, ranging from national pride and international prestige to scientific and economic payoffs", he said. However, he added that China's largely separate national security space programme, "again like other major countries, draws upon the same technology base as its civilian programme".

While China is not behaving any differently from other countries with a space programme, the US has been particularly wary of it.

Since 2011, the US Congress has banned the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (Nasa) from working with China because of human rights issues and national security concerns. The US has blocked China from taking part in the International Space Station, a 15-nation collaboration, leading the Chinese to start their own space station project.

With the current China-US trade tensions threatening to spill into other areas and with the US seeing China as a strategic rival, it would be wishful thinking on the part of the Chinese to hope for cooperation with the US in its space programme although the nationalistic Global Times expressed this aspiration in an editorial on Thursday.

The situation is made worse by comments from the head of the Chinese lunar exploration programme, Mr Ye Peijian, 74.

When asked by a reporter last March why China was going to the Moon, he said: "The universe is an ocean, the Moon is the Diaoyu islands, Mars is Huangyan island. If we don't go there now even though we're capable of doing so, then we will be blamed by our descendants. If others go there, then they will take over and you won't be able to go even if you want to. This is reason enough."

The Diaoyu islands, known as Senkaku to the Japanese, are claimed by both China and Japan. Huangyan island, also known as Scarborough Shoal, is claimed by both China and the Philippines.

Mr Malcolm Davis, a senior analyst at the Australian Strategic Policy Institute, wrote in an article last year that Mr Ye was "making clear that either China will control the Moon and other celestial bodies, or others will". He added: "The US and allies must decide whether Chinese control of this high ground is acceptable."

Right now, countries such as Britain have been willing to collaborate with China in some areas of space science research and there is talk of the Chinese and the European Space Agency collaborating on a human outpost on the Moon. But whether such cooperation will deepen or continue, given the West's increasing concern over China's growing military and technological strength and its geopolitical assertiveness, is uncertain.

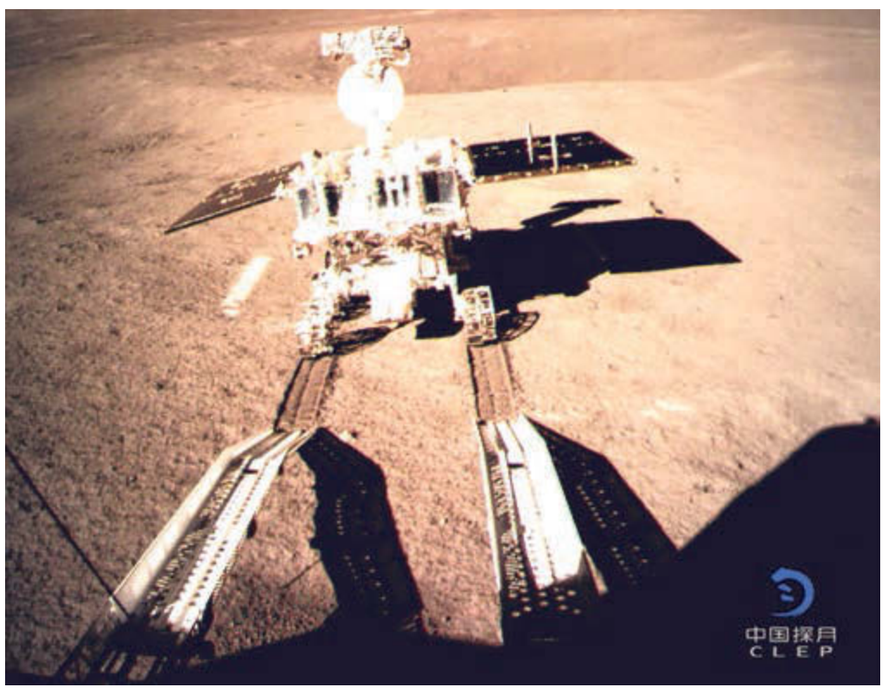
US President Donald Trump has talked about starting a space force, an idea derided by some, but supported by others who think China's increasing space capabilities call for such a force to protect growing US commercial and military interests in space.

While China, said Prof Logsdon, is very capable in advanced technology and does not have to depend on other countries to tutor it in space capabilities, it is still far behind the US, as admitted by the Global Times in its editorial. The US sent manned missions to the Moon 50 years ago, while China has yet to do so, it noted. Nasa spends US$35.9 billion (S$48.9 billion) a year on its space programme, while China spends only US$4.9 billion.

It would be better for China if it can persuade the US to collaborate with it, by winning trust through being more transparent about its space programme. Both sides could also work to strengthen the United Nations treaty system on outer space to better manage space activity and competition.

It would be far better for mankind if there could be global cooperation in space exploration even as the space-faring countries compete for economic and security benefits.

suinoi@sph.com.sg



The Yutu-2 driving on the surface of the far side of the Moon after descending from the Chang'e-4 lunar probe on Thursday. PHOTO: AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Lunar rover leaves first 'footprint' on Moon's far side

BEIJING • China's lunar rover Yutu-2, or Jade Rabbit-2, has left the first "footprint" from a man-made spacecraft on the far side of the Moon.

The rover touched the lunar surface at 10.22pm on Thursday, leaving a trace on the loose lunar soil. The process was recorded by the camera on the lander and the images were sent back to Earth via the relay satellite Queqiao (Magpie Bridge), the China National Space Administration (CNSA) announced.

Launched on Dec 8 last year, the Chang'e-4 lunar probe, comprising the lander and the rover, landed on the far side of the Moon on Thursday morning.

The feat has been hailed as a milestone in the history of space exploration and the country's quest to reach the top of this field.

Since the Moon revolves around Earth at the same rate it rotates, the same side always faces Earth. The other side, most of which cannot be seen from Earth, is called the far side, or dark side, because most of it is uncharted.

After the successful landing, experts verified the condition of Queqiao, the environment parameters of the landing area, the condition of the probe's equipment as well as the angle of incoming sunshine to prepare for the separation of the lander and the rover.

At 3.07pm, experts sent the separation order to the probe via Queqiao. After receiving the order, Yutu-2, atop the probe, extended its solar panel, stretched out its mast and started to drive slowly to the transfer mechanism, said the Beijing Aerospace Control Centre.

The transfer mechanism unlocked as planned, with one side reaching the Moon's surface, allowing the rover to descend onto the surface from the slope.

Yutu-2 is capable of enduring vacuum pressure, intense radiation and extreme temperatures. It is equipped with a panoramic camera, an infrared imaging spectrometer and radar measurement devices to obtain images of the Moon's surface and detect lunar soil and structure. XINHUA



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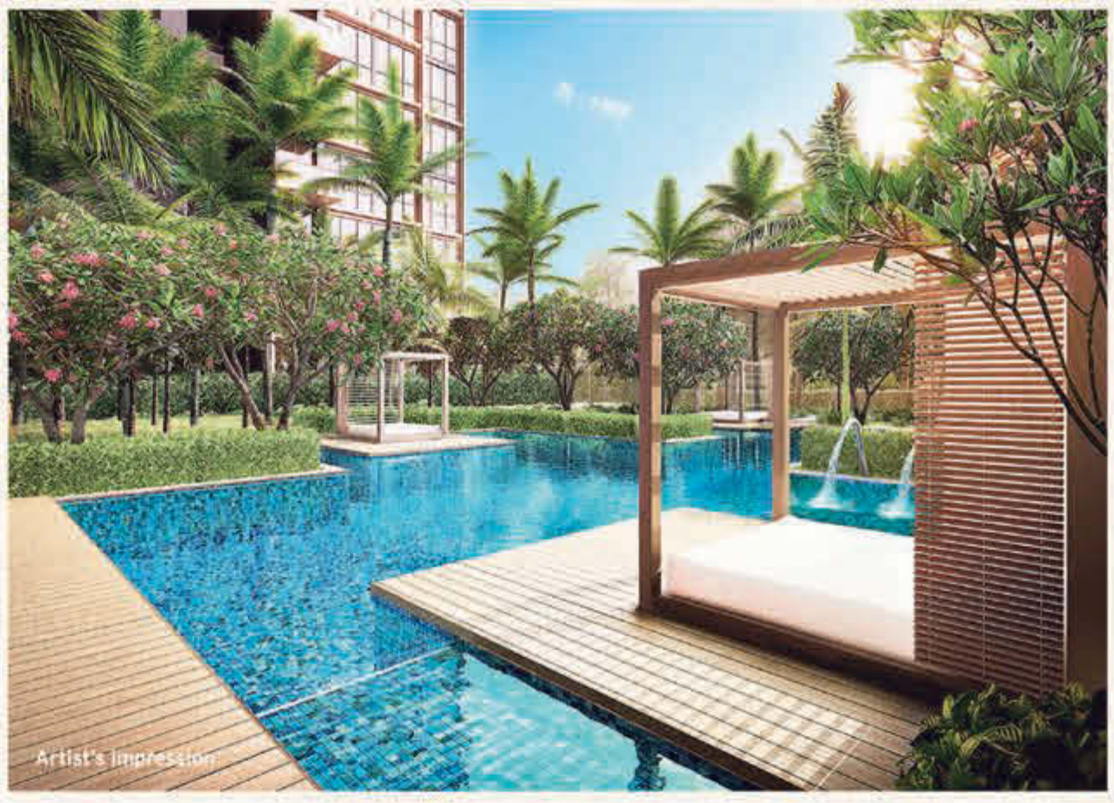
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KMT rejects Xi's plan for HK-style union with Taiwan

China-friendly party says 'one country, two systems' framework lacks public support

TAIPEI • Chinese President Xi Jinping's proposal for a Hong Kong-style union with Taiwan has spurred a rare show of unity from the island's fiercely combative political parties.

No thanks, they both said.

The China-friendly Kuomintang (KMT) said in a statement on Thursday that the "one country, two systems" framework adopted before Hong Kong's return from British rule was unacceptable for democratically run Taiwan because it lacked public support.

The opposition's remarks echoed criticism from President Tsai Ing-wen and her pro-independence Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), after Mr Xi reaffirmed China's interest in the model on Wednesday.

"We look forward to the two sides of the Taiwan Strait engaging in a competition of systems to determine the best system to advance the welfare of the people on both sides of the strait," the KMT said.

The rebuke by Taiwan's strongest advocate for improved relations with the mainland underscores the difficulty Mr Xi faces in trying to resolve the 70-year dispute during his tenure.

The Hong Kong system – originally conceived as a solution for Taiwan – has come under increasing criticism as Beijing works to rein in dissent in the financial hub.

Former Taiwanese president Ma Ying-jeou, the KMT leader who held an unprecedented meeting with Mr Xi in 2015, also said in a radio interview that there was no market for "one country, two systems" in Taiwan, which has been ruled separately since the Chinese civil war.

Mr Xi made his remarks in a speech on Wednesday to commemorate the 40th anniversary of a landmark Communist Party appeal across the Taiwan Strait. He proposed that both sides elect representatives "to conduct extensive and in-depth democratic consultations on cross-strait relations and the future of the Chinese nation".

"The difference in systems is not an obstacle to reunification or an excuse for separation," he said.

Mr Xi's message appeared targeted at the KMT, which has long advocated talks, rather than Ms Tsai and the DPP.

Mr Ma even took issue with Mr Xi's interpretation of the so-called 1992 Consensus, a negotiating framework that underpinned their meeting. Under it, both sides agree there's "one China", even if they disagree on what that means.

Mr Ma said both sides should clearly define what the 1992 Consensus means to avoid misunderstandings. He said Mr Xi's comments show a sense of urgency in Beijing towards making progress in resolving the Taiwan dispute.

Dr Jonathan Sullivan, director of the University of Nottingham's China Policy Institute, called Mr Xi's speech "a huge missed opportunity to demonstrate new and creative thinking that takes the reality of Taiwan's position and Taiwanese public opinion into account".

"Instead, it rehashed the same old thinking that has totally failed to resonate in Taiwan in the 40 years since the first direct communication to Taiwanese compatriots," Dr Sullivan said. BLOOMBERG



Babies at an infant care centre in Chongqing. China's population could start shrinking as soon as 2027, a report said. PHOTO: AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Dwindling number of births sparks concern in China

BEIJING • A top Chinese research institution projected that China's population could start shrinking as soon as 2027 – three years earlier than expected – underscoring growth concerns in the world's second-largest economy.

A report released on Thursday by the state-run Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (Cass) said the country's population would start declining within eight years if the birth rate held steady at 1.6 children per woman. The population – at 1.39 billion in 2017, and the world's largest – could fall to 1.172 billion by 2065, the report said.

The estimate was one of a flurry of alarming demographic projections spurring debate about the impact of China's restrictive birth limits on the country's long-term growth prospects.

The China Times newspaper cited two demographers last week saying that the country's total number of births probably fell below 15 million last year – a figure that would speed the population drop beyond even the updated Cass projections.

The forecasts were circulated on social media platforms, including Weibo, leading users to question if policymakers had been too optimistic in assuming a baby boom would follow China's 2016 policy change allowing parents to have up to two children, instead of one.

China is slated to release official birth estimates for last year on Jan 21.

In August, China's Parliament removed "family planning" policies from the latest draft of a revised civil code slated for adoption in 2020, a signal that population control measures would eventually be eliminated.

The State Council, China's Cabinet, has commissioned research on the repercussions of ending the roughly four-decade-old policy and intends to enact the change nationwide, Bloomberg reported in May, citing people familiar with the matter.

Demographic trends are weighing on President Xi Jinping's efforts to develop China's economy, driving up pension and healthcare costs and sending foreign companies looking elsewhere for labour.

China's State Council projected in 2017 that about one-quarter of its population would be aged 60 or older by 2030 – compared with 13 per cent in 2010. BLOOMBERG

Huawei punishes staff for tweeting via iPhone

HONG KONG • China's Huawei Technologies has punished two employees for New Year greetings sent on the smartphone maker's official Twitter account using an iPhone, an internal memo showed.

On New Year's Day, Huawei, whose P-series handsets compete with Apple's iPhone, sent a "Happy #2019" message to followers in a tweet marked sent "via Twitter for iPhone".

The tweet was quickly removed but screenshots of the blunder spread across social media.

"The traitor has revealed himself," quipped one user on microblog Weibo, in a comment "liked" over 600 times.

In an internal Huawei memo dated Jan 3 seen by Reuters, corporate senior vice-president and board director Chen Lifang said "the incident caused damage to the Huawei brand".

The mistake occurred when outsourced social media handler Sapient experienced "VPN problems" with a desktop computer, so it used an iPhone with a roaming SIM card to send the message on time at midnight, Huawei said in the memo.

Twitter, like several foreign services such as those from Facebook and Alphabet, is blocked in China, where the Internet is heavily censored. To gain access, users need a virtual private network (VPN) connection.

Huawei, which overtook Apple as the world's second-largest smartphone vendor by volume in January-September, declined to comment on internal issues when contacted by Reuters.

Sapient did not immediately respond to a Reuters request for comment sent via the contact form on its website. Calls to its Beijing office went unanswered.

In the memo, Huawei said it had demoted two employees responsible by one rank and reduced their monthly salaries by 5,000 yuan (S$1,000).

It is not the first time the use of the Apple product has given cause for embarrassment.

Mr Hu Xijin, editor-in-chief of nationalistic tabloid Global Times, was mocked online last year after he used his iPhone when expressing support for Huawei and domestic peer ZTE Corp. He later said his actions were not hypocritical as foreign brands should not be discriminated against. REUTERS



People out to block me from the PM job: Anwar

Threat comes from within his PKR, says pro-Anwar veterans group Otai Reformasi



Parti Keadilan Rakyat (PKR) leader Anwar Ibrahim (right) chatting with PKR deputy president Azmin Ali last September. Mr Anwar's latest comments are seen as an acknowledgement of the tensions between the two of them. PHOTO: BERNAMA

KUALA LUMPUR • Malaysia's prime-minister-in-waiting Anwar Ibrahim told a British business daily that there are politicians in the country's ruling alliance who want to stop him from leading the country after Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad.

Datuk Seri Anwar told Financial Times in an interview published on Wednesday that there are "pockets, people who for their own reasons would like to sabotage these arrangements", referring to a deal within the Pakatan Harapan (PH) alliance for him to take over from Tun Dr Mahathir after about two years.

"I can't deny, some people in the ruling coalition (have) a different agenda," he told FT.

His comments are seen as an acknowledgement of the tensions between him and Datuk Seri Azmin Ali, his deputy president in Parti Keadilan Rakyat (PKR).

Asked by Malaysian reporters yesterday to confirm what he had said, he at first denied saying so: "I never said that. No fake news will be entertained."

But he was later quoted by New Straits Times online as saying: "You cannot deny that there are some elements who might not agree. It's a democratic process. What is important is PH and I and Tun Mahathir have agreed."

Mr Anwar, who was Malaysia's deputy prime minister in 1998 before he was sacked by then Premier Mahathir, is now once again a rung below the country's top post. Mr Anwar's followers call him the "prime-minister-in-waiting".

After being released from prison and pardoned by the Malaysian King following the May general election last year, Mr Anwar, 71, is now president of PKR, which has the biggest number of lawmakers in Parliament.

But there are tensions between his faction in PKR and those in the camp of PKR's No. 2, Mr Azmin, who want to prevent Mr Anwar from becoming Malaysia's eighth prime minister.

There is also suspicion among Mr Anwar's supporters that some leaders in the four-party PH alliance want Dr Mahathir, 93, to continue as prime minister until the next general election, due in 2023.

A pro-Anwar veterans group, Otai Reformasi, said there are individuals in PKR who want to prevent Mr Anwar from becoming PM.

"Otai Reformasi will oppose anyone who attempts to thwart Anwar from becoming prime minister as agreed to by the Pakatan Harapan presidential council," said the group's chairman, Selangor assemblyman Idris Ahmad.

Asked by reporters about the identity of the persons he was referring to, Mr Idris said the Facebook postings of these people clearly showed their intentions.

"We don't want doubts to be created and will go all out to defend the transition of power," he was quoted as saying yesterday by The Star online news.

On Tuesday, PKR supreme council member and PH secretary-general Saifuddin Abdullah raised eyebrows when he said PH's top leaders had never discussed how long Dr Mahathir would lead the country.

Mr Anwar's supporters had insisted all along that PM Mahathir should step down after two years.

To ease tensions, Mr Anwar, in a Facebook post on Wednesday after an hour-long meeting with the Prime Minister in Putrajaya, said Dr Mahathir must be given the space to lead the country within the agreed timeframe.

KL, S'pore to discuss airspace: Mahathir

KUALA LUMPUR • Malaysia will hold discussions with Singapore over the dispute involving Malaysian airspace in Johor's Pasir Gudang and the Republic's Seletar Airport, Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad said yesterday.

"The Cabinet has decided to have discussions with Singapore on the matter of the Seletar Airport," he told a news conference after a meeting of his ruling coalition, as quoted by Bernama news agency.

The foreign ministers of Singapore and Malaysia will meet in the Republic on Jan 8, said Singapore's Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Tuesday. The ministry added that there were also plans for the transport ministers of both countries to meet soon. The statement did not elaborate on what will be discussed.

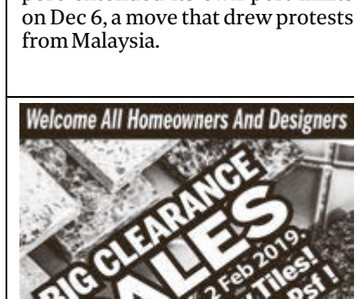
Airspace – as well as port limits – has become a bilateral issue in recent months.

Malaysia has objected to new landing procedures at Seletar Airport scheduled to be enforced on Jan 3. It claims that the Instrument Landing System procedures will adversely affect developments in Johor's Pasir Gudang Port and wants to reclaim management of the airspace, where Singapore has been providing air traffic services since 1974.

Additionally, the Civil Aviation Authority of Malaysia published a Notice to Airmen on Dec 25, informing the aviation community of Malaysia's establishment of a permanent restricted area for the purpose of military activities over Pasir Gudang from Jan 2.

On Oct 25, Kuala Lumpur also unilaterally extended the Johor Baru port limits such that they encroach on Singapore's territorial waters off Tuas. In response to the expanded Johor Baru port boundaries, Singapore extended its own port limits on Dec 6, a move that drew protests from Malaysia.





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Aussie man kills himself after road rampage



The wreckage left by the unidentified Australian man who rammed into a police car yesterday. He then hijacked a supermarket delivery truck and a taxi and crashed into other cars. PHOTO: EPA-EFE

SYDNEY • An Australian man rammed his four-wheel-drive into a Sydney police car, hijacked a supermarket delivery truck and taxi, rammed other cars and stabbed and wounded a passer-by before killing himself in front of the police yesterday.

The dramatic chain of events, which police said was not terror-related, began when police tried to pull over the four-wheel-drive for not displaying licence plates.

The driver rammed the police car, dumped the four-wheel-drive and hijacked a supermarket delivery truck about 7km away, then continued across town for another 20km to a suburb near the airport, hitting several cars along the way.

The driver, 24, tried to steal another car, stabbing a passer-by who tried to stop him, before stealing a taxi. Police finally stopped the attacker in the taxi and tried to use the Taser on him, but the man stabbed himself in the chest and died at the scene.

"The offender wasn't trying to intentionally harm people," Acting Assistant Commissioner Mick Fitzgerald told reporters in Sydney. "It was a man who was attempting to do everything he could to avoid arrest. His actions, in particular the actions when he stabbed the innocent person, are the actions of a person who we believe had mental health problems."

The police did not identify the man, but he was known to the police and did not have a significant criminal history.

Footage circulated on social media showed a man in a beige shirt and cap gesturing for a taxi driver to get out of his car, then getting in and driving the red taxi away.

The Australian Associated Press quoted Mr Chris Burton, who witnessed the first stabbing, as saying that the attacker looked "crazy and frazzled". "He goes to the guy, 'stab me, stab me, stab me' and stuck his neck out."

The passer-by who was stabbed was in a serious but stable condition, the police said. The media reported that a woman was also stabbed in the melee, but the police did not confirm this. REUTERS

Boy allergic to seafood dies from inhaling fish fumes: Dad

Cause not confirmed yet but experts say fish protein can be found in cooking fumes

WASHINGTON • Cod fish was cooking on the stove when 11-year-old Cameron Jean-Pierre arrived at his grandmother's home in New York.

Cameron, who had a known allergy to seafood, started to wheeze during the visit this week, so his father said he reached for his son's asthma medication.

But this time, the nebuliser machine that Cameron had used during allergy attacks in the past did not seem to work – the boy could not breathe, his father said. "That was when I called 911," his father, Mr Steven Jean-Pierre, said on Thursday in a phone interview with The Washington Post.

He said his son was gasping, saying: "I love you, Daddy. I love you. I feel like I'm dying." The boy was rushed to a nearby hospital, where he was pronounced dead.

A spokesman for the Office of Chief Medical Examiner in New York City said the cause of death has not yet been determined, but Cameron's father said his son died after inhaling the fish fumes.

Experts said a severe allergic reaction from inhalation of fumes from cooking fish is very rare.

The sixth-grader, who lived in Piscataway, New Jersey, was described by his father as an ambitious, athletic and good student. "He loved life," Mr Jean-Pierre said about his son.

"For the 11 years he was in this world, he touched a lot of people."

Piscataway Superintendent of Schools Teresa Rafferty said in a statement that the school community "is deeply saddened by the loss of Cameron and we express our heartfelt sympathies to his family and friends".

"He was a good student and a positive and happy presence in the classroom," she added.

NBC New York reported that the police do not suspect any criminality in Cameron's death.

Nearly six million children in the United States are estimated to have food allergies, including to finned fish such as salmon, tuna and halibut, according to Food Allergy Research and Education.

Dr Adela Taylor, who chairs the allergy and asthma centre at Mayo Clinic Health System in Eau Claire, Wisconsin, said it is possible "to have an allergic reaction to steam or fumes produced by cooking seafood".

"The fish protein that is responsible for the allergic reactions is very stable when cooked," the doctor said in an e-mail to The Washington Post.

"Published research articles indicate fish protein can be detected in steam and fumes during cooking or processing. It is possible that a person who is exposed to cooking steam or fumes, especially in an enclosed space, could have an allergic reaction."

She said: "There are case reports of severe allergic reactions, including anaphylaxis, from inhalation of fumes from cooking fish, but it is a very rare presentation."

Dr Anna Nowak-Wegrzyn, a professor of paediatrics at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai Hospital in New York, also emphasised that an allergic reaction would not be caused simply by smelling an allergen, but by inhaling the particles that are released into the air by cooking, steaming or roasting.

Dr Nowak-Wegrzyn, who specialises in allergy and immunology, said she has had patients who are severely allergic to milk report symptoms such as coughing and wheezing when walking into a coffee shop.

Still, she said that it is "incredibly rare".

"You'd have to be very, very, very allergic," she said.

The medical examiner's office is still investigating Cameron's death to determine whether he may have indeed died from fish fumes. WASHINGTON POST



Baidu, Sohu caught in China's latest online clean-up drive

Cyberspace watchdog starts six-month effort to purge online media of 'vulgar' information



Shares in Baidu and Sohu fell after China's cyberspace police ordered both firms to suspend a plethora of news services for a week. PHOTO: AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

BEIJING • China's cyberspace police have ordered Baidu and Sohu to suspend a plethora of news services for a week, kicking off an online clean-up campaign with two of the country's biggest Internet corporations.

The Cyberspace Administration of China (CAC) on Thursday announced it was starting a six-month effort to eradicate "vulgar" information from online media, including messaging services and live-streaming platforms.

The CAC said it summoned executives from both firms and ordered several of Baidu's and Sohu's news and content feeds to suspend updates from Jan 3 to 10 while they root out undesirable content. Shares in both firms fell as the broader market whipsawed after Apple's surprise outlook cut spooked investors.

Neither the firms nor the regulator stipulated exactly why they were being punished, nor what was needed to resume operations. But Beijing has increasingly taken a hard line as China's Internet ecosystem flourishes, instigating crackdowns on video games and social media that have hurt industry leaders such as WeChat operator Tencent and ByteDance.

They represent the most severe digital crackdown in China's history, shuttering services or temporarily forcing them from app stores for spreading everything from crude jokes to banned information.

While one-week bans are unlikely to have a major impact on either Baidu or Sohu, they come at a stressful time with advertising sales slowing as consumers spend less.

The latest crackdown also emphasises the sweep of powers wielded by China's regulators: Everything from pornography and gambling to vulgarity and "spreading unhealthy lifestyles" will be fair game over the next six months. The CAC will "severely investigate and close a number of illegal websites and accounts, effectively curbing harmful information", it said, adding that it was targeting 12 types of "illegal Internet information" in its drive.

Both Sohu and Baidu said on their social media feeds that they would comply and "rectify" the affected services. BLOOMBERG



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Researchers found that 14-year-old girls were heavier users of social media compared with boys and more girls than boys in the study experienced cyber bullying or harassment. PHOTO: AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Social media linked to higher risk of depression in teen girls

LONDON • Teenage girls are twice as likely as boys to show depressive symptoms linked to social media use – mainly due to online harassment and disturbed sleep, as well as poor body image and lower self-esteem, researchers said yesterday.

In a study analysing data from nearly 11,000 young people in Britain, researchers found that 14-year-old girls were heavier users of social media, with two-fifths of them using it for more than three hours a day, compared with a fifth of boys.

The study also found that 12 per cent of light social media users and 38 per cent of heavy social media users (more than five hours a day) showed signs of having more severe depression.

When the researchers looked at underlying processes that might be linked with social media use and depression, they found that 40 per cent of girls and 25 per cent of boys had experienced online harassment or cyber bullying. Disrupted sleep was reported by 40 per cent of girls compared with 28 per cent of boys. Anxiety and poor sleep are both linked to depression.

40%

Percentage of girls in a study who reported experiencing disrupted sleep, compared with 28 per cent of boys. Anxiety and poor sleep are both linked to depression.

Girls were also more affected when it came to social media use and concerns about body image, self-esteem and appearance, the researchers found, but here the gender gap was smaller.

Dr Yvonne Kelly, a professor at University College London's Institute of Epidemiology and Health Care who co-led the study, urged parents and policymakers to note its results.

"These findings are highly relevant to current policy development on guidelines for the safe use of social media and calls on industry to more tightly regulate hours of social media use for young people," she said in a statement. She added that families may "want to reflect on when and where it's okay to be on social media" and consider placing restrictions on teens having mobile devices in their bedrooms.

The study, funded by the UK Economic and Social Research Council, was published online in the journal EClinicalMedicine yesterday. REUTERS



A pro-China demonstrator waving Chinese flags outside the venue of the Taipei-Shanghai Twin City Forum held in Taipei recently. Beijing has always regarded Taiwan as a breakaway province with no option but to return to the motherland. PHOTO: AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

China riled by US move on Taiwan in new Bill

On Dec 31, President Donald Trump signed into law the Asia Reassurance Initiative Act, which will beef up US presence in the Indo-Pacific region and support measures. The Straits Times' China and India bureaus look at the implications.

Tan Dawn Wei
China Bureau Chief
In Beijing

There ought to be more than a few things in the newly passed Asia Reassurance Initiative Act that China would not be pleased with.

But the one that truly annoys Beijing is the United States' insistence on cosying up to Taiwan, long regarded by China as a breakaway province with no option but to return to the motherland.

On Wednesday, China's foreign ministry said it "resolutely opposed" the signing of the Bill, which calls for more official exchanges between the US and Taiwan and regular arm sales to the island, and had formally registered its displeasure with Washington.

"The Act has seriously violated the one-China principle and stipulations in the three China-US joint communiques, and bluntly interfered in China's domestic affairs," foreign ministry spokesman Lu Kang said at a news briefing.

In the communiques signed in 1972, 1979 and 1982, the US acknowledged and affirmed the one-China principle, although it also stated that Washington will maintain unofficial ties with Taiwan.

Just two days after US President Donald Trump signed the proposed Bill into law, his Chinese counterpart, Mr Xi Jinping, warned: China will not tolerate foreign meddling in the Taiwan issue and will resort to military force, if necessary.

The fact that China has chosen to make noise over Taiwan instead of the other portions targeting it in the Bill indicates Beijing's insecurities over the island, say analysts.

"From Beijing's perspective, continuing US support only emboldens the Taiwanese to stay firm in their rejection of what Beijing calls 'reunification' but what for most Taiwanese would be an annexation," said Mr Michal Thim, research fellow at the Association for International Affairs in Prague.

Even though the contents of the Bill are mostly reiterations of what the US has been saying about its Indo-Pacific strategy, Beijing will see this legal move as a concrete step by Washington to implement this much-talked-about game plan, says Associate Professor Li Mingjiang of the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies.

"This kind of interpretation will certainly add to China's anxiety towards this emerging Indo-Pacific construct. For some time, many Chinese policy elites have been saying that this strategy is just a slogan without much substance, but, now that it has passed into law, it will change some of their thinking: that Americans mean business when they proposed the strategy," he said.

Aimed at containing China's growing influence in the region, the Act allows for US$1.5 billion (S$2 billion) to be spent every year for the next five years on US military, diplomatic and economic engagement and assistance in Asia.

It addresses, among other things, China's militarisation of the South China Sea, its alleged intellectual property violations and human rights abuses in Xinjiang.

"The main implication for China is that, despite its efforts, using both sticks and carrots, to weaken the US position in the region... the US is not going anywhere and it is not backing off from support to partners and allies in the region," said Mr Thim.

China experts do not believe this legislation will significantly alter the competitive dynamics between China and the US in the region and, even without this law, Washington will continue to take China to task for those alleged transgressions.

But the Taiwan issue is different. Prof Li said there is a sense now that China is creating conditions for unification through opening up dialogue with political forces in Taiwan.

"With the new American policy completely contrarian to China's new Taiwan policy objective, Beijing will be worried about this, and that Washington is intentionally playing the Taiwan card in US-China relations."

dawntan@sph.com.sg

Washington keen on closer ties with India: Analysts

Nirmala Ganapathy
India Bureau Chief
In New Delhi

The Asia Reassurance Initiative Act showed growing US interest in further deepening ties with India amid common worries over the rise of China, said analysts.

They said the new law could even lead to enhanced military cooperation, including in the sale of defence equipment to India.

The Act "calls for the strengthening and broadening of diplomatic, economic and security ties between the United States and India" and "recognises the vital role of the strategic partnership between the United States and India in promoting peace and security in the Indo-Pacific region".

Indian Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, in a tweet, highlighted parts of the law, including how it termed the "designation of India as a major defence partner" as "unique to India".

The Act noted that this designation in 2016 "elevates defence trade and technology cooperation between the United States and India to a level commensurate with the closest allies and partners of the United States".

Analysts said that the new US legislation was reassuring for India as US President Donald Trump seemed to remain constant on closer ties with India.

"For India, I personally think every time the US makes a statement it reassures India that Trump is not abandoning India amid unpredictability with its other close strategic partners," said former foreign secretary Lalit Mansingh.

"The US has two important interests in deepening ties with India. First to meet the potential threat of China and looking for a counterbalance (in India).

"Second is India as a market for US military technology."

Defence analyst P. K. Ghosh said: "The law is a reflection of closer ties which are being put on a firmer footing."

gnirmala@sph.com.sg



13 policemen die in Rakhine rebel attacks

YANGON • Buddhist Rakhine insurgents killed 13 policemen and injured nine in attacks on four police posts in Myanmar's Rakhine state yesterday as the country marked Independence Day.

Fighting surged again in the state early last month between government forces and the rebel Arakan Army, which wants more autonomy for the Buddhist ethnic Rakhine minority.

The restive western state is also where a military-led crackdown in 2017 prompted hundreds of thousands of minority Rohingya Muslims to flee to neighbouring Bangladesh.

The separate conflict between the military and Arakan Army rebels forced 2,500 civilians from their homes by the end of last year, according to the United Nations.

The official Myanmar News Agency said four police posts in the Buthidaung area in northern Rakhine came under attack from hundreds of Arakan Army fighters after daybreak yesterday. Thirteen policemen were killed and nine injured as police were forced to abandon two of the posts, it said, adding that the military was now conducting a "clearance" of the area.

Myanmar military spokesman Zaw Min Tun said earlier that the insurgents had hit police outposts in a rugged region near the border with Bangladesh. "These police posts are there to protect the national races in the area so (Arakan Army rebels) shouldn't attack them," he said, referring to mostly Buddhist ethnic groups in the area who are, unlike Rohingya Muslims, considered Myanmar citizens.

Arakan Army spokesman Khine Thu Kha confirmed the assault and said the rebels later retrieved the bodies of seven "enemies". At least 12 members of the security forces detained in the fighting were later freed.

He said the attacks were in response to a military offensive against the Arakan Army in recent weeks that had also targeted civilians. The military last month announced a four-month halt to fighting in the north and north-east to kick-start peace talks with armed groups seeking ethnic autonomy, but that announcement excluded Rakhine state. REUTERS

Russia charges former US Marine with espionage

American may be latest pawn in new Cold War between US and Russia

WASHINGTON • He loved to travel around Russia by train, collected tea glass holders stamped with Russian historical scenes and maintained social media friendships with ordinary Russians, from a hairstylist to retired members of the country's military.

Now Paul Whelan, a former US Marine and current security chief for BorgWarner, an international auto parts manufacturer, has been accused of espionage by Russia and is in solitary confinement in Moscow's notorious Lefortovo Prison – long used by the KGB and its successors for Soviet dissidents and foreign spies.

Former CIA officers said they did not think Whelan was a spy.

Whatever the truth, Whelan, 48, has become the latest pawn in a face-off between Russia and the United States as rising tensions take on the cast of the Cold War years, when espionage charges and spy swaps were common.

Whelan's arrest comes after a Russian woman, Maria Butina, admitted to being involved in an organised effort, backed by Russian officials, to lobby influential Americans. She pleaded guilty on Dec 13 in US District Court in Washington to conspiring to act as a foreign agent.

On Thursday, the Russian authorities formally charged Whelan, who could face up to 20 years in prison if convicted, his lawyer, Mr Vladimir Zherebenkov, said.

There is little doubt, however, that Whelan was an unusual person with out-of-the ordinary travel and associations.

A University of Michigan graduate, Whelan was deployed twice to Iraq before he was court-martialled by the Marine Corps in 2008 on charges of larceny and passing bad cheques. He had visited Russia since at least 2006 and was familiar to many Russians who had known him or interacted with him online. They said he seemed to pop up every six months or so.



Paul Whelan has been visiting Russia since at least 2006. He was arrested on his latest trip, last month, when he attended a friend's wedding. PHOTO: EPA-EFE

Unusual for an occasional visitor, Whelan had an account on Vkontakte, the Russian version of Facebook, for about a decade. He did not post often, but wrote congratulatory notes in Russian on various major holidays and occasionally voiced his opinions about American politics.

Whelan's family said he was in Russia on his most recent trip, last month, for the wedding of a friend from the Marine Corps who was marrying a Russian woman.

That is where the Russian authorities apprehended Whelan last Friday during a meeting with a Russian citizen in his hotel room. Rosbalt, a Russian news agency close to the security services, quoted an unidentified intelligence source as saying that Whelan was accused of trying to recruit the Russian to obtain classified information about staff members at various Russian agencies.

CIA officers expressed scepticism that Whelan was a spy. This was partly because, unlike Whelan, most CIA officers work in foreign countries while posing as diplomats. And if caught in an act of espionage, their diplomatic passports ensure they cannot be long detained, and at worst face expulsion.

Former CIA officials said the agency almost never sends officers into Russia without diplomatic protection. NYTIMES

Merkel's data among leaked info

BERLIN • Private data stolen from hundreds of German politicians, including Chancellor Angela Merkel, has been released online, the government said yesterday.

The information, comprising home addresses, mobile phone numbers, letters, invoices and copies of identity documents, was published via Twitter in December but inexplicably came to light only this week.

It was not immediately clear whether the officials were targeted by hackers or were the victims of an internal leak.

"Personal data and documents belonging to hundreds of politicians and public figures were published on the Internet," government spokesman Martina Fietz told reporters, confirming that Dr Merkel was one of them.

"The government is taking this incident very seriously."

Among those affected were members of the Bundestag Lower House of Parliament, and the European Parliament, as well as those from regional and local assemblies, she said.

Deputies from all parties represented in the Bundestag were affected, as well as President Frank-Walter Steinmeier.

But Ms Fietz said a preliminary investigation indicated that "no sensitive information or data" from Dr Merkel's office had been leaked.

The leak also exposed the private data of celebrities and journalists.

The daily Bild and public broadcaster RBB first reported the leak.

Bild said it was not clear when the data theft began but said it continued until the end of October.

Ms Fietz said the amount of Dr Merkel's data that was leaked was "not excessive" but warned that some of the documents and information published might be faked.

Parliamentary group leaders were notified of the attack late on Thursday. AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE





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China says US travel warning not based on fact

China welcomes foreigners, says Foreign Ministry, but they must abide by its laws

BEIJING • China hit back at the US yesterday, saying its updated travel advisory did not stand up to scrutiny.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Lu Kang told a regular news briefing in Beijing that the country always welcomes foreigners, including Americans, but expects them to respect and abide by Chinese laws.

On Thursday, the US State Department renewed its warning for US citizens travelling in China, urging Americans to exercise increased caution due to "arbitrary enforcement of local laws" amid heightened diplomatic tensions over the arrest in Canada of a Chinese technology company executive.

The updated travel advisory maintains the warning at "Level 2" but also warns about extra security checks and increased police presence in the Xinjiang Uighur and Tibet Autonomous Regions, Reuters reported.

The advisory follows the detentions by the Chinese authorities last month of Canadians Michael Kovrig, a former diplomat and an adviser with the International Crisis Group think-tank, and businessman Michael Spavor. China says both men were suspected of endangering state security.

Tensions with China increased after Canadian police arrested Huawei Technologies' chief financial officer, Ms Meng Wanzhou, on Dec 1 in Vancouver at the request of the United States.

Mr Lu said China will protect foreign citizens' "security and legitimate rights and interests in China, including freedom of entry and exit".

"Of course, we also hope that foreign citizens in China should respect China," he added.

He dismissed the latest US travel advisory, saying that the large number of American visitors to China last year alone was proof that China was a safe country.

"The travel advisory issued by the US, quite frankly, cannot stand up to scrutiny. From January to November 2018, the number of Americans that came to China reached 2.3 million," he said.

He also said that the US has in recent years "used various excuses and reasons to set up obstacles for Chinese citizens to enter the United States and conducted unprovoked inspections".

"This is a problem that the US should pay attention to and correct."

In its previous travel advisory for China issued on Jan 22 last year, the State Department urged Americans to "exercise increased caution" in the country because of "the arbitrary enforcement of local laws and special restrictions on dual US-Chinese nationals".

Canada said on Thursday that 13 of its citizens have been detained in China since the arrest of Huawei's Ms Meng. "At least" eight of those 13 have since been released, the Canadian government said in a statement, without disclosing what charges if any had been laid, Reuters reported.

Prior to Thursday's statement, the detention of only three Canadian citizens had been publicly disclosed.

They are Mr Kovrig, Mr Spavor and Ms Sarah McIver, said a Canadian government official, who declined to be identified, on Thursday.

Ms McIver, a teacher, has since been released and has returned to Canada. Mr Kovrig and Mr Spavor remain in custody. Canadian consular officials saw them once each mid last month.

At a press conference yesterday, Chinese Vice-Minister of Justice Liu Zhenyu was asked about the 13 Canadian citizens.

He said China is a country ruled by law and will handle this problem in accordance with the law. It will also protect the legal rights of the parties in accordance with the law, he said.

• Additional reporting by Tan Dawn Wei in Beijing

Back to business – with a prayer



People offering prayers on the first business day of the year at the Kanda Myojin shrine in Tokyo, Japan, yesterday. Japan's benchmark bond yield fell to the lowest in more than two years as a stronger yen and a slowdown in global manufacturing spurred demand for the assets as a haven. PHOTO: BLOOMBERG



House passes Bills in bid to end shutdown

But move excludes border wall, prompting veto threat from White House that will not resolve shutdown issue

WASHINGTON • The new Democrat-controlled House of Representatives passed a package of Bills that would reopen the federal government without paying for US President Donald Trump's border wall, drawing a swift veto threat from the White House and leaving the partial shutdown no closer to getting resolved.

But two Senate Republicans who are up for re-election in 2020 broke with Mr Trump and party leaders on their shutdown strategy on Thursday, saying it was time to end the impasse even if Democrats won't give Mr Trump the more than US$5 billion (S$6.8 billion) in border funding he is demanding.

The comments from Senators Cory Gardner of Colorado and Susan Collins of Maine – the only Senate Republicans running for re-election in states Mr Trump lost – pointed to cracks within the GOP that could grow as the shutdown reaches the two-week mark.

"I think we should pass a continuing resolution to get the government back open. The Senate has done it last Congress, we should do it again today," Mr Gardner said, as the 116th Congress got under way with pomp and ceremony on both sides of the Capitol.

But Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, a Republican, reiterated on Thursday that the Senate will only take up government spending legislation that Mr Trump supports.

Top congressional leaders were set to meet Mr Trump at the White House late yesterday, in a repeat of a meeting they had on Wednesday.

Mr McConnell's stance prompted angry attacks from new House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and other Democrats, who insisted they were trying to give Republicans a way out of the standoff by passing two pieces of legislation: one, a package of six spending Bills that were negotiated on a bipartisan basis in the Senate and would reopen nearly all the federal agencies closed since Dec 22, the second, a stopgap spending Bill up to Feb 8 covering only the Department of Homeland Security.

The House strategy could allow Senate Republicans to pass legislation that would reopen most of the government while setting aside the debate over the border wall. But, thus far, because of Mr Trump's opposition, party leaders have refused.

"What we're asking the Republicans in the Senate to do is to take 'yes' for an answer. We are sending them back exactly, word for word, what they have passed," Ms Pelosi said. "Why would they not do that? Is it because the President won't sign it?

Mr McConnell restated the stance he has adopted since the Senate unanimously passed a short-term spending Bill last month without additional wall funding – only to watch as Mr Trump turned against it the very next morning amid a conservative backlash.

"I've made it clear on several occasions, and let me say it again: The Senate will not take up any proposal that does not have a real chance of passing this Chamber and getting a presidential signature," he said.

As the impasse dragged on, Senate Appropriations Committee chairman Richard Shelby said for the first time that the stalemate could continue for "months and months".

A funding lapse of that length would have compounding consequences for the government's ability to provide promised services, and for the about 800,000 federal workers who are either furloughed at home or working without any guarantee of getting paid.

Nevertheless, Mr Trump showed no sign on Thursday that he was going to budge. A veto threat issued by the White House against the House Bills said it "cannot accept legislation that provides unnecessary funding for wasteful programmes while ignoring the nation's urgent border security needs".

The shutdown has lasted 14 days without any signs of compromise or earnest negotiations, with Democrats largely unifying and a number of Republicans flummoxed over Mr Trump's strategy.

Many of the federal workers affected will miss their first pay cheque from next week. Multiple national parks and museums have closed, and the impact is expected to become even more severe in the coming weeks. WASHINGTON POST



Ms Nancy Pelosi being applauded on Thursday after her election as Speaker of the House in the House of Representatives during the opening session of the 116th Congress. PHOTO: AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

A House most diverse

The new House of Representatives, convening with a Democratic Party majority, boasts a record number of women and is also the most diverse ever.

Ms Sharice Davids, a member of the Ho-Chunk Nation from Kansas, and Ms Deb Haaland, a Laguna Pueblo from New Mexico, hugged each other and wiped away tears as Democratic Party leader Nancy Pelosi was sworn in on Thursday. Ms Davids and Ms Haaland are the first Native American women to be voted to Congress.

Native Americans, all but wiped out in a genocide by European settlers, were made citizens of the United States of America only in 1924, and got the right to vote only in 1948.

Palestinian American Rashida Tlaib of Michigan and Somali American Ilhan Omar of Minnesota became the first two Muslim women in Congress.

Ms Omar recalled how she and her father had landed in Washington as refugees 23 years ago.

The current Congress also has a record number of openly lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender members, with two in the Senate and eight in the House, the most ever for both Chambers.

Nirmal Ghosh

News analysis

Trump faces pressure on various fronts as Democrats rule House



Nirmal Ghosh

US Bureau Chief
In Washington

Veteran Nancy Pelosi returned for a second stint as Speaker of the House of Representatives on Thursday as the Democrats took control of the Chamber even amid a deadlock with President Donald Trump over funding for a border wall that has led to a partial federal government shutdown.

The House passed legislation to fund the federal government late on Thursday but it did not include money for the wall and Mr Trump is seen as unlikely to sign it.

While the wall and the shutdown of nearly two weeks have dominated headlines, the spotlight is shifting to the pressures that the President will face on various fronts.

In particular, the question is: To what degree Democrats newly in charge of House committees, including the powerful ones on oversight, judiciary and intelligence, will investigate Mr Trump and members of his administration?

California Congressman Adam Schiff will head the House Intelligence Committee; Maryland Congressman Elijah Cummings will head the Oversight Committee; and New York Congressman Jerry Nadler the Judiciary Committee.

The committees can demand documents and, through subpoenas, force people in government or the private sector to testify. The committees cannot bring any charges against anyone, but can refer any misconduct they may find to the Justice Department. And they can serve to amplify issues for the public – which could be consequential politically.

Mr Cummings, for instance, has said he wants to summon Mr Trump's former lawyer, Michael Cohen, who was sentenced to jail for tax fraud and admitted to paying hush money to two women claiming to have had affairs with Mr Trump.

"I'm certain (it will be) a rude awakening for the President that he now has a Congress that's willing to do oversight of his administration, that is going to look into legitimate issues," Mr Schiff told National Public Radio (NPR) on Thursday.

Conflicts of interest and allegations of Russian influence over Mr Trump's policy decisions are high on Mr Schiff's radar, and reports say his committee is hiring money laundering and forensic accounting experts.

Any attempt to impeach the President would likely start at the Judiciary Committee. But there is little enthusiasm for that route.

Ms Pelosi, while saying this week that the potential indictment of the President remains an open discussion, has also said she is not keen on impeachment.

For sure, impeachment is unlikely to succeed because the Republicans have a majority in the Senate and there are no obvious grounds for it.

Much depends, analysts say, on a much-anticipated report by Special Counsel Robert Mueller but it is not clear when this report will be ready.

Separately on Thursday at Ellis Island, New York, Ms Letitia James, the first African American woman to hold a state office, was sworn in as Attorney-General.

Ms James campaigned on tackling Wall Street abuses, protecting immigrant rights, fighting the opioid epidemic and reining in abuses by law enforcement – but also on an openly anti-Trump platform.

"He should be charged with obstructing justice," she said late last year in a video. "It's important that everyone understand that the days of Donald Trump are coming to an end."

Meanwhile, the stalemate over the border wall shows no sign of a breakthrough, though Congressional leaders were set for another meeting with President Trump yesterday morning in Washington.

Soon after Ms Pelosi was sworn in, Mr Trump, in an impromptu appearance at the White House briefing room, made a pitch for the wall on national security grounds. With him were Customs and Border Patrol (CPB) officers with experience on the Mexico border, who told journalists how barriers had drastically reduced the flow of illegal immigrants.

The President wants over US$5 billion (S$6.8 billion) for the border wall with Mexico. The Democratic Party is urging the President to accept a House proposal to fund the government for another 30 days – but without funding the wall – to make room for talks to arrive at a compromise.

The shutdown, which affects about a third of the federal government, has left a wide range of government offices unmanned. Around 800,000 federal government employees have been rendered idle with no pay cheques nor guarantee of back pay.

The longer it drags on, the wider the ripple effect – a 16-day shutdown in 2013 was estimated to have cost the economy US$24 billion, according to Standard and Poor's.

"Our hope is that Republicans in the Senate will realise that it's hurting them, hurting them, and they will... go to (Senate majority leader) Mitch McConnell and McConnell will say we've got to make some kind of agreement, and we can make an agreement on all kinds of border security things but we think a big concrete wall makes no sense," Senate minority leader Chuck Schumer told NPR.

"The solution we gave them... is open up the rest of the government and let's spend 30 days figuring out a solution."

But the White House showed no sign of blinking.

"What we are completely focusing on is keeping the President's promise," Vice-President Mike Pence told conservative Fox News host Tucker Carlson. "You have no border security without a wall, and you have no deal without a wall."

nirmal@sph.com.sg

Needles found in grapes in Melbourne

A couple from Melbourne, Australia, found two needles in grapes they had bought from a supermarket on Tuesday. Mr Skender Hasa and his partner, Ms Shams Alsubaiy, were shocked by the find, reported 9 News Melbourne.

Mr Hasa had bought the bag of seedless grapes from an outlet of supermarket chain Woolsworths in the suburb of Craigieburn.

Ms Alsubaiy discovered the needles when she pricked her finger while picking up a green grape after dinner.

"When we cut it open, there was a needle stuck through it," Mr Hasa told 9 News. They found two needles after cutting open every grape in the bag.

Ms Alsubaiy, who is pregnant, was thankful she had not eaten the needle.

She said: "I thank God I didn't eat them. I'm pregnant and I don't want anything to happen."

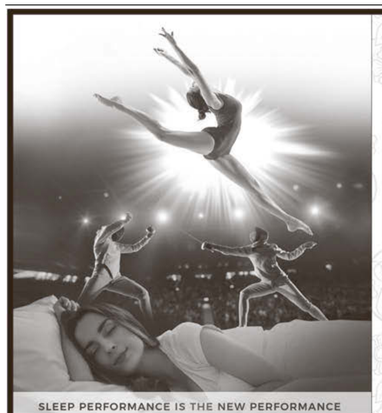
Australian police confirmed that they are investigating this incident. "All contamination reports referred to police will be investigated thoroughly, with the safety and well-being of the public at the forefront of our minds," the police said in a statement to nNews.com.au.

The police urged people to report any similar cases of fruit contamination. They warned that anyone found contaminating food products can be charged with a serious indictable offence with penalties of up to 10 years in jail.

Woolsworths said in a statement: "We're aware of the customer report and will work closely with the authorities as they investigate this matter."

Last September, there were hundreds of cases of needles being found in Australian strawberries. Supermarkets pulled boxes from shelves across Australia and New Zealand and farmers had to dump their crops.

Goh Yan Han



A Blossoming New Year

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SCIENCE

Vaccine helps fight bacteria at Viet catfish farm

Fish survival rates up thanks to project led by S'pore researchers

Cheryl Teh

The Singapore-owned Hiep Thanh Group catfish farm in Vietnam is spread over an area the size of 250 football pitches and produces 35,000 tonnes to 40,000 tonnes of fish a year – much of which ends up in Singapore.

So when over half of its stock died because of deadly bacteria strains around two years ago, its owners were at a loss as to what to do.

That was until they decided to contact Nanyang Polytechnic's Dr Jeffrey Seng – a microbiologist who once developed a customised barramundi vaccine to address the high mortality rates at a fish farm in Singapore and to boost its yields.

Dr Seng, a senior specialist in aquatic health and diagnostics at the polytechnic, and Professor Patrick Loh, co-principal investigator and a senior lecturer at the polytechnic's School of Chemical and Life Sciences, spearheaded a research project to combat the problem at the catfish farm in Vietnam.

They developed a vaccine that effectively protected the catfish from a bacterium called *Aeromonas hydrophila*. They found that 90 per cent of the catfish given the vaccine survived, compared with just 10 per cent of unvaccinated ones.

"Vietnamese catfish are often used in frozen fillets and wholesale products in Singapore," Dr Seng said, highlighting the necessity of protecting supplies from being completely obliterated.

The farm in Vietnam is owned by Singapore-based KMP Group, which operates as a subsidiary of Salim Group, Indonesia's biggest conglomerate.

The research project started in February 2017, and it took three months to isolate and identify the bacterial pathogens in the sick and dead catfish.

Dr Seng found that unvaccinated fish in the ponds had a 40 per cent to 60 per cent mortality rate, while fish mortality in unvaccinated catfish fingerlings was as high as 80 per cent to 90 per cent.

Dr Seng then proceeded to develop a prototype vaccine against the *Aeromonas hydrophila* strain, the pathogen he isolated from the diseased catfish in Vietnam.

Dr Dung Tu Thanh, one of Dr Seng's collaborators, has since discovered two other major pathogens that cause mass mortality in the Vietnamese catfish: *Edwardsiella ictaluri* and *Flavobacterium columnare*.

The two researchers are currently working on making vaccines for these pathogens as well, to address all three fish-killing bacterial strains. Their final aim is to make a polyvalent, or three-in-one, vaccine, to further protect the catfish.



Dr Jeffrey Seng with a sick catfish (right) and a healthy one at the Vietnam farm. The vaccine developed by his team effectively protected catfish at the farm from a bacterium called Aeromonas hydrophila. PHOTO: NANYANG POLYTECHNIC

Dr Jeffrey Seng found that unvaccinated fish in the ponds had a 40 per cent to 60 per cent mortality rate, while fish mortality in unvaccinated catfish fingerlings was as high as 80 per cent to 90 per cent.

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The many ways in which exercise keeps us young

Gretchen Reynolds

Some of the biggest news in exercise science last year concerned the tiniest effects from physical activity, which does not mean that the effects were inconsequential. It means they were microscopic.

We found out, for instance, that exercise changes how our cells communicate with one another, as well as how rapidly they age. This new research began to detail the many, pervasive ways in which exercising alters the inner workings of our bodies and contributes to better health.

There were other, broader themes, too, in 2018's fitness-related science, including about how older people can be enviably youthful if they are active and the unexpected roles that weight training may play in our health.

But for me, the most exciting exercise research in 2018 went small. One study, for instance, found that people's blood contained more of certain vesicles, which are tiny bubbles filled with biological material, after aerobic exercise.

When scientists subsequently isolated these vesicles in mice and tagged them with a dye that glows, they tracked where they went and discovered that most homed in on the liver.

The vesicles entered the organ, dissolved and delivered a load of biological stuff, including snippets of genetic material that can supply messages to other genetic material.

In this way, the scientists speculate, the vesicles probably delivered a biological alert to the liver, letting it know exercise was under way, and it might want to start releasing stored energy for use by other, working tissues, like the muscles.

This study is a bracing reminder that multiple far-flung bodily systems are involved when we move and they all must communicate, but the process is bogglingly complex and still mostly yet to be mapped.

A similar message emerged from other studies I wrote, although they delved into how, at a molecular level, exercise makes us healthier. It does, of course. People who exercise tend to live longer and with far fewer diseases and disabilities than people who do not.

But we do not fully understand the many underlying biological steps involved.

One study examined one small piece of this puzzle, involving the levels of hundreds of different proteins in the bloodstreams of people who regularly exercise or not.

And there were differences. People who exercised had more and less of multiple proteins, which matters, since proteins spur other biological operations throughout the body. In effect, aspects of the exercisers' everyday physiology appear to be unlike those of people who are sedentary.

So, too, the look and to some extent the "age" of their chromosomes may be different, according to another study I covered last year.

It found that sedentary, middle-aged people who took up aerobic exercise for six months developed longer telomeres in their white blood cells. Telomeres are the tiny caps on the ends of chromosomes that protect our DNA from damage during cell division.

Telomeres shorten as a cell ages, until they are so abbreviated that the cell cannot function and often dies. Lengthy telomeres, however, are thought to denote relative cell youth and vigour.

In this study, aerobic exercise appears to have lengthened people's telomeres, almost dialling back time. If that finding doesn't motivate all of us to want to move more, other studies from last year that looked at exercising and ageing using a wider lens probably should.

One, from March, showed that older cyclists had immune systems that resembled those of much younger people, as well as muscles that retained a youthful size and fibre content, even among the riders who were well into their 70s.

So, too, older recreational athletes displayed the muscles of much younger people in another study, this one from November, and it found, too, that people who had been working out for decades had the aerobic fitness of whippersnappers 30 years their juniors.

Perhaps most encouraging, a study published in July tells us that it is not too late to benefit if we have managed to avoid exercising into midlife.

In that experiment, middle-aged people who began a two-year-long programme of regular aerobic exercise reversed the age-related stiffening of their cardiac arteries.

Almost all of this research focused on aerobic exercise. But a few studies this year also provided a plug for resistance workouts.

One found they were associated with a substantial reduction in the risk of experiencing or dying from a heart attack or stroke, even if people did not undertake aerobic exercise.

Another showed a very strong link between lifting weights and avoiding depression.

And a third, my favourite, indicated that weight training can be quite brief but still beneficial. In this experiment, one set each of seven different resistance exercises led to the same overall gains in muscular strength and endurance as two or even three sets of the exercises, as long as people pushed themselves. The full, fast routine required only 13 minutes.

So, look for me this year on the bike paths and running trails and, at least for 13 minutes at a stretch, in the gym. NYTIMES



A study last year showed that older cyclists had immune systems that resembled those of much younger people, as well as muscles that retained a youthful size and fibre content. ST FILE PHOTO

Perhaps most encouraging, a study published in July tells us that it is not too late to benefit if we have managed to avoid exercising into midlife. In that experiment, middle-aged people who began a two-year-long programme of regular aerobic exercise reversed the age-related stiffening of their cardiac arteries.



The San Francisco-based non-governmental organisation Rainforest Connection has proven that a bioacoustic system linked to a mobile phone network can detect gunshots, chainsaws, and the sound of motorbikes and truck engines.

A view of the Mamiraua Sustainable Development Reserve in Brazil's Amazonas state. The beauty of bioacoustic data, the writer says, is that researchers can run algorithms to map soundscapes, allowing us to better understand ecological communities and monitor change over time, including the impacts of drought, storms and seasonality. PHOTO: AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

ScienceTalk

How listening ears can help save the forests

Acoustic recorders can detect minute changes in environment

Rhett Butler

Our eyes in the sky have revolutionised forest monitoring, giving us a big picture of the state and health of the planet's green spaces.

But while satellites measure tree cover, most do not capture what happens under the canopy, such as poaching, incursions from invasive species, degradation from selective logging, and understorey fires.

These gaps can be filled instead with ears on the ground.

By capturing an entire soundscape using simple recording devices, bioacoustic systems can document a wide range of species and detect very minor changes in ecological communities, even potentially revealing when humans are present in a forest.

These activities have a significant impact on wildlife populations and forest health, as well as providing warning signs about impending deforestation. For example, tiger poachers operating in a dry peatland represent a fire risk: All it takes to ignite a haze-causing inferno is a dropped cigarette.

Camera traps get us closer to a solution, but they do not tell the whole story since they capture just a fraction of activity.

They are often conspicuous and can be destroyed by those who want to avoid detection.

But acoustic recorders these days can detect animal calls and song from several hundred metres away. Autonomous sound-recording devices come as small units that are inconspicuous, can be programmed to record either continuously, if there is sufficient solar power or cellular network signal for direct transmission of data to cloud storage, or at given intervals, if battery power and data storage are limited.

They can also be useful for real-time interdiction – the San Francisco-based non-governmental organisation Rainforest Connection has proven that a bioacoustic system linked to a mobile phone network can detect gunshots, chainsaws, and the sound of motorbikes and truck engines. Devices can be mounted out-of-sight in the canopy, so they are not obvious to passers-by below.

Given this functionality, bioacoustic systems can be used for many conservation projects, including corporate zero deforestation commitments, which could offer a good opportunity for pilot schemes, and eventually even a financing mechanism for implementation.

Forty governments, 20 sub-national governments and 57 multinational companies have pledged under the New York Declaration on Forests to halve deforestation by 2020, while scores of plantation companies in Singapore, Malaysia and Indonesia have committed to eliminate deforestation from their supply chains.

But in the past year, investigations have revealed that some companies continue to source palm oil and wood produced via ongoing conversion of peatlands and forests in Indonesia.

There is renewed scepticism about these corporate commitments at a time when concerns about climate change and biodiversity loss are growing.

One way to address this lack of trust would be for companies to increase accountability within their supply chains.

Indeed, this is already happening: Food and beverage giant Nestle is using high-resolution satellites to monitor suppliers, while agribusiness group Wilmar is mapping its suppliers and reporting on the results via an online dashboard. But gaps remain.

Companies have an interest in maintaining the forest reserves they have committed to protect. Therefore, they would benefit from having real-time alerts on the status of these conservation areas.

At the same time, there are marketing benefits of demonstrating a robust monitoring system to customers, regulators and suppliers. There is even a possibility that a firm might use a bioacoustic system to showcase what species its commitments are helping protect.

In cases where habitat restoration is involved, companies can establish baselines to document the recovery of species, definitely proving the ecosystem is healthy and functioning.

But the really exciting aspect of networked bioacoustic systems comes from making audio data available to scientists.

The beauty of bioacoustic data is that researchers can run algorithms to map soundscapes, allowing us to better understand ecological communities and monitor change over time, including the impacts of drought, storms and seasonality.

And as algorithms improve, they can be re-run against a constantly growing library of bioacoustic data, providing more insight.

This could result in a scenario where zero deforestation firms are funding real-time monitoring of forests, with data fed into the cloud for use by scientists, offering a better picture of what's working and what's not working in conservation and landscape restoration.

Combined with satellite data and networked camera traps, we would have a much clearer picture for measuring trends in wildlife populations, detecting threats to forests before outright deforestation occurs, and understanding the earnestness of corporate conservation commitments.

• Rhett Butler is the founder and CEO of Mongabay.com, a conservation news service that publishes in English, Bahasa Indonesia and Spanish. His article "The sound of a tropical forest", which talks about the benefits of bioacoustic systems, appeared in the journal Science on Jan 4, and was co-authored with tropical forest ecologist Zuzana Burivalova of Princeton University and Dr Edward Game, who leads conservation planning research and development for The Nature Conservancy's Global Science team.

Why frozen salmon looks less pinkish

Q&A

Q *How does frozen salmon lose its pinkish colour?*

A What you are observing may be temporary colour loss because of light scattering by ice crystals.

Researchers in Norway have used microscopy to study the size of ice crystals in frozen salmon at varying temperatures.

The study measured the size of the voids in cell tissue left by the ice crystals. The freezing temperatures thought best to ensure quality caused a substantial loss in colour, the researchers found.

The temperatures left many small ice crystals in the flesh of the fish, which increased the scattering of light and the absorption of visible wavelengths.

Most of the coloration in pinkish fish comes from astaxanthin, a red, fat-soluble carotenoid.

Normal levels were still present in properly frozen fish, the scientists found. The colour loss is temporary.

The researchers said their methods could be used to distinguish between temporary colour loss and the washed-out appearance of truly bad fish.

NYTIMES



Researchers say freezing temperatures thought best to ensure the quality of salmon cause a substantial loss in its colour. PHOTO: NYTIMES







OPINION

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The Straits Times says

Walking the talk on Korean peace deal

The world has come to look expectantly each time there is a New Year's Day address by North Korea's leader, Mr Kim Jong Un. Two years ago, his speech indicated the imminent test of an intercontinental ballistic missile. Last year, it was about the diplomatic opening that followed back-channel conversations with Washington and Seoul. This year, aside from the fact that the Kim dynast surprised many by appearing in a lounge suit and speaking in the informal setting of his library, there was not much by way of hard news in what was a long and rambling speech. Had US President Donald Trump readied his Twitter handle to prepare a sturdy response to any possible Kim threats, he would have been disappointed.

The speech nevertheless merits careful reading. First, it indicates how much of a worry the North Korean economy is for Mr Kim. Reams of socialist-language prose were dedicated to exhortations on improving coal and electricity production, supporting farm workers, and promoting metallurgy and chemicals for realising the Juche state ideology that drives the country. Along with this came a surprising renewed commitment to nuclear energy and signals, in classic Kim fashion, that he was willing to reopen the Kaesong industrial complex – not because the North desperately needed the jobs and the money, but "in consideration of the hard condition of business persons from the southern side".

Second, Korea watchers will have no trouble divining the exuberance directed at Seoul and a parallel impatience with Washington. Since the world has no details about the private messages Mr Kim sent to South Korean President Moon Jae-in and Mr Trump, interpretations necessarily have to be based on what is in the public record. This includes a denunciation of South Korean military exercises with foreign forces as "the source of the situation on the Korean peninsula" and a call for an end to "the introduction of war equipment, including strategic assets, from outside".

Mr Kim seems to have kicked the ball into the US court, not least with his silken threat of a "new path" if Washington does not reciprocate and make moves towards the jointly pledged denuclearisation of the Korean peninsular. Sadly, little progress appears to have been made since the lofty promises of the Kim-Trump summit in Singapore last June. While the situation today is a far cry from the wild talk and tweets of fire and fury that so alarmed the world previously, Asia still faces an unpalatable choice: accept North Korea as a de facto nuclear weapons state in the manner of Pakistan and Israel and deal with it, or risk a reset to the tense days of old. The world deserves better; having raised expectations, it is time that Mr Kim and Mr Trump move to deliver on their much-touted peace deal that they committed themselves and their countries to.

ByInvitation

Birth pangs of a 'New Malaysia'

As an untested ruling coalition, Pakatan Harapan needs time. That said, its leaders need to better manage fissures within the coalition and its constituent members or face further loss of confidence.



Joseph Chinyong Liow
For the Straits Times

Eight months after Malaysia's momentous election, the initial euphoria is slowly but surely giving way to harsh reality as rumblings of discontent grow louder and louder within Malaysia's ruling Pakatan Harapan (PH) coalition.

When it took over the levers of power, the new administration helmed by the indomitable Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad was quick to acknowledge the challenges that lay before it: a colossal graft scandal that was blamed on former prime minister Najib Razak and which was bleeding the nation's finances, a ballooning national debt, a sclerotic bureaucracy, and institutions of state that had become heavily politicised.

Perhaps it was the realisation of the sheer magnitude of the challenges awaiting him and his PH compatriots that prompted Dr Mahathir to try to manage expectations when he openly admitted that Pakatan never expected to win. But win Pakatan did; and deliver, Pakatan must.

Alas, this is where the rubber hits the road. While the election may be over, a transition from politicking to policymaking has proven to be a struggle.

Efforts to articulate a new governing framework are clouded by discussions of who commands the "Malay vote" (as if Malays form a monolithic voting bloc), policy discussions give way to political posturing, and initiatives to bolster a nascent narrative of equality are frustrated by the all-too-familiar incendiary rhetoric of racial and religious baiting.

Pakatan's victory has catalysed insecure ethnonationalists, and there is every reason to believe that for reasons of both expediency and survival, former ruling party Umno and PAS (Parti Islam Se-Malaysia) will make common cause with each other in the noble name of "Malay unity".

So, as much as anything, the Pakatan government finds itself having to struggle against some deeply entrenched yet strikingly familiar mindsets and practices. The irony of it is that these are manifesting within the ruling coalition itself. Indeed, if Pakatan is not careful, it will end up being its own worst enemy.

'KATAK' POLITICS

Those who follow Malaysian politics would be familiar with the so-called "katak" phenomenon. Katak (frog, in Malay) is a term used pejoratively to describe opportunistic politicians who "hop", or "cross the floor" in Westminster parliamentary parlance, from one party to another; given the right inducements, entire parties have been known to leap from one coalition to another.

Once a master of the art form, Umno has been devastated by defections in recent months: 17 to be exact, and counting. These 17 lawmakers are part of the party's initial slate of 54 parliamentarians who won their respective contests on May 9 last year.

The consequence is sobering for Umno: for the first time since independence, it does not command the largest bloc of seats in Parliament.

In Sabah, a state with a notorious reputation for "katak" politics I hasten to add, Umno was dealt a particularly massive blow when the core of its state leadership jumped ship and now nonchalantly proclaim themselves to be "Pakatan friendly", or more accurately, "Mahathir friendly", independents.

In response to the suspicious eyes being cast their way, the leaders of Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia, the Pakatan party which has been most welcoming of defectors, have taken pains to reassure their allies and supporters that they would only consider taking in former Umno members who are "not out to create tension", "not crooks and criminals", and "not implicated (in the malfeasance associated with the 1MDB saga)". Note how the qualifications are all couched in the negative. Note also, the party's reluctance to distance itself from political opportunists.

BERSATU'S ULTIMATE GOAL

To what end then, is all this commotion about defections? To answer this question, we must understand Bersatu and its ultimate objective.

There is much talk about the leadership transition from Dr Mahathir to Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, which apparently remains unresolved despite efforts on the part of the two protagonists to attenuate speculation by presenting a picture of certainty. And it is still unclear whether Dr Mahathir's declared two-year deadline is cast in stone.



ST ILLUSTRATION: CEL GULAPA

Of course, those of us who wish Malaysia well should be under no illusion that the Pakatan government can ring in the necessary changes overnight, and we should not be too hasty in judgment.
Rome wasn't built in a day, and it would be churlish to expect so of Pakatan's "new" Malaysia.

To be sure, there is good reason to be sceptical. Anyone who has followed Malaysian politics closely over the last few decades would know better than to take things at face value, especially when it involves a wily old hand who is anything but straightforward.

That being said, I do not believe that Bersatu's main preoccupation is with the length of Dr Mahathir's tenure, or even who he bequeaths the seat of power to.

For Bersatu, the most pressing matter is to ensure the party enters a post-Mahathir era in a position of strength within the coalition.

What lies behind this imperative? Quite simply, it is because Malaysian politics tomorrow will be a game of numbers. Bersatu now commands 16 parliamentary seats, marginally up from the 13 it won in May. This makes it a junior partner in the Pakatan coalition, trailing Mr Anwar's PKR (Parti Keadilan Rakyat) by some distance.

How is this a problem? Well, it has everything to do with who gets to call the shots, and has access to largesse.

As the proceedings of its recently-concluded annual assembly demonstrate, this is no small matter for Bersatu. Consider the fact that the vast majority of its membership – both leadership and rank and file – are former Umno cadres.

In other words, they were members of the party that dominated the Barisan Nasional and, by extension, Malaysia for 61 years. Why is this significant? Because they have imbibed Umno's approach to coalition politics which, pared down to its core characteristics, turns on two features: money politics and the overbearing manner in which it handled affairs in Barisan Nasional especially since the early 1980s.

There is a further numbers game at play, which at present works against Bersatu's favour. The party also sorely needs a conveyor belt of new blood for leadership.

The reality that confronts Bersatu is that the vast majority of Pakatan's young technocratic and leadership talent is concentrated in PKR and DAP (Democratic Action Party) now. In comparison, Bersatu's president and chairman have a combined age of 165.

For these reasons, it should hardly be a surprise that Bersatu is entertaining, if not encouraging, defections as a political strategy.

Because protecting the fragile unity of Pakatan is paramount, coalition leaders have restrained themselves in response. Usually outspoken leaders such as Mr Lim Kit Siang, Mr Mohamad Sabu and Mr Lim Guan Eng have been keeping their own counsel.

Indeed, in Mr Lim Guan Eng's case, his silence was deafening in the wake of news that his nemesis and former Umno stalwart Rahim Thamby Chik was joining Bersatu (Guan Eng was jailed under the Sedition Act in 1998 for calling the Umno-led government out over its inaction towards statutory rape allegations against Rahim).

Perhaps it was the spirit of Mahathir-Anwar reconciliation at work. But silent acquiescence should not be mistaken for ringing endorsement, for there is much chatter going on in private.

At any rate, if seasoned leaders are treading carefully along the edges of the issue, not so their rambunctious followers, who have begun to openly question Bersatu's (and, by extension, Dr Mahathir's) wisdom – and intent – in encouraging defections.

THE (SUCCESSION) PLOT THICKENS

The bedlam that has beset the ruling coalition has been amplified by developments involving the growing profile of PKR's deputy president Azmin Ali, who is also the powerful federal Minister of Economic Affairs.

Mr Azmin is best known as an Anwar loyalist who proved a capable lieutenant while Mr Anwar orchestrated the Reformasi movement in absentia from his prison cell in Sungei Buloh.

But in the context of today's unfolding politics, it is Mr Azmin's relationship with Dr Mahathir that is compelling. In fact, the Mahathir-Azmin relationship goes back quite a long way, to when the latter was a student in the US in the mid-1980s. Some would remember that it was Dr Mahathir who handpicked Mr Azmin to be Mr Anwar's apprentice in 1987 while the latter was education minister.

Fast-forward to the present. Despite the nonagenarian Prime Minister's recent efforts to quell speculation regarding succession, the rumour mill in Kuala Lumpur has gone into overdrive about a possible Mahathir-Azmin effort to block Mr Anwar's ascent.

The Anwar-Azmin relationship has also turned frosty of late, and a recent episode which saw Mr Azmin take serious issue with Mr Anwar's move to strengthen his position in the party by appointing allies to key positions, can only serve as more grist for this rumour mill.

Having survived a robust challenge for the deputy presidency of PKR in hotly contested party elections recently, Mr Azmin's name has been making the rounds in PKR circles as a serious alternative prime ministerial candidate to Mr Anwar.

Indeed, if decades of Malaysian politics prove anything, it is that nothing can be taken for granted, especially when it comes to party allegiances and leadership transitions.

Of course, those of us who wish Malaysia well should be under no illusion that the Pakatan government can ring in the necessary changes overnight, and we should not be too hasty in judgment.

Rome wasn't built in a day, and it would be churlish to expect so of Pakatan's "new" Malaysia.

As an untested coalition government comprising parties that have yet to have the measure of each other, Pakatan needs time. That being said, it would do well to take measures to inspire greater confidence. Better management of differences within component parties, and within the coalition itself, is probably a good place to start.

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Field notes



Street view of Eunpyeong Hanok Village, located at the foot of Mount Bukhan in north-western Seoul. It is a government initiative to encourage Koreans to return to their roots by living in a traditional hanok. The village already draws about 870,000 visitors a year and there are plans to promote it as a tourist attraction when it is completed. ST PHOTOS: CHANG MAY CHOON

Koreans home in on the joys of traditional dwellings

Old and young rebuild 'hanok' to combine character with modern comforts – aided by govt subsidies



Chang May Choon

South Korea Correspondent
In Seoul

Sixty-three-year-old Kim Sun-dae had planned to move out of Seoul and return to his hometown in the countryside when he retired.

But he changed his mind after a chance visit three years ago to a mountainous region in north-western Seoul, where a small area was earmarked for a cluster of hanok, or traditional Korean homes with tiled roofs, wooden lattice windows and a courtyard.

"My wife loved the environment there so much that we decided to buy land to build our own hanok," the former head of a bond pricing agency told The Straits Times.

In November 2017, the couple moved into their new house – a modernised two-storey hanok with an attic that doubles as a playroom for their four-year-old grandson.

"Friends always ask me how is it living in a hanok and I say it's good. The air here is great and it's quiet; I can sleep very well," said Mr Kim.

His wife Jun Ok-ja, 59, a gardening enthusiast, raved about how she can grow different flowers in different seasons in their madang (Korean for courtyard).

"You never feel bored because the house is so open and the views are great," said Madam Jun, who had lived in a hanok as a child.

Hanok were once despised for being notoriously cold in winter and hot in summer. To use the toilet, you had to step out into the courtyard. Many were bulldozed in the post-war era to make way for high-rise apartment blocks. But today, they have gained a new fan base as people rediscover the joy of living in a spruced-up heritage home, or one built in its likeness.

The word hanok, which translates to "Korean house", was coined in the late 19th century to refer to the giwajib (tiled roof houses) that noblemen lived in. The chogajip (straw-roofed houses) occupied by commoners are rarely seen today.

To make them more liveable in today's world, architects have added modern comforts such as wall insulation, air conditioners, glass windows and indoor toilets. They have also created hidden storage spaces to tuck away possessions that do not gel with the hanok's minimalist style.

Only about 11,000 original hanok – some dating back to the early 1900s when they first started disappearing during Japanese rule – remain in Seoul.

Most are located within government-designated conservation zones in five main districts, including tourist-packed Bukchon in central Seoul, where many hanok have been turned into guesthouses, restaurants, cafes as well as shops.

In the same way that Singapore preserves shophouses and China protects courtyard houses, South Korea has been pushing to conserve old hanok. The government dispenses generous subsidies to help owners offset the high cost of remodelling the house's interior while keeping the exterior intact, as required by law.

Hanok owners in Seoul can get up to 180 million won (S$213,300) to offset renovation costs, and the city government disbursed almost 21.8 billion won worth of subsidies from 2001 to 2016.

RETURN TO KOREAN ROOTS

New hanok villages are also being built across the country in a bid to encourage a return to Korean roots after decades of Western-influenced development following the 1950-53 Korean War.

German-Korean architect Daniel Taendler, a hanok specialist, said: "When Korea was poor and underdeveloped, things such as having enough to eat were more important. Now people are starting to realise that they have lost an important part of their architectural culture. They're asking, 'We're Korean, but what makes us Korean if everything is Westernised?'"

Eunpyeong Hanok Village, where Mr Kim lives, is the result of a 2010 government initiative to develop a residential area at the foot of Mount Bukhan.

An official from the Seoul Metropolitan Government (SMG) said it decided to devote the land to hanok after noting the pervasiveness of apartment complexes and "rising concerns over Koreans losing our identity and architectural culture from the accelerated destruction of hanok".

There are also plans to promote the village as a tourist attraction when it is completed. It already draws about 870,000 visitors a year – a spillover effect from nearby temples, a hanok museum and a popular hiking trail.

Altogether, 91 pockets of land have been sold and 67 hanok completed as of last September, said the SMG official. People in their 50s and 60s account for 75.5 per cent of owners, followed by those in their 40s (17.5 per cent) and 30s (3.5 per cent). Their professions vary, including poet and artist.

Mr Kim and his wife are grateful for the 76 million won-subsidy they received from Seoul city to build their hanok on the 200 sq m plot they bought. They declined to reveal how much they spent on it, but said it typically costs 4 million to 5 million won per pyeong (Korean equivalent of 3.3 sq m). This is three times more than a regular house, as hanok construction requires specialised skills from a niche group of workers, including carpenters.

Giving this reporter a tour of his home – furnished with wooden furniture reminiscent of a bygone era and designed to allow natural light to cast pretty shadows of the wooden lattice windows – Mr Kim said he gets both the benefits of traditional and modern living.

He and his wife can sit on the heated floor sipping tea in front of the window overlooking the courtyard at one moment, then watch TV in the basement living room the next.

His wife enjoys interacting with neighbours. "We have our own community culture. We meet often, share pots of flowers and go on picnics together. It's really different from living in an apartment," she said.







Left: Retiree Kim Sun-dae and his wife Jun Ok-ja in the courtyard of their new home. Below, left: Mr Kim's four-year-old grandson on the staircase of the hanok. Below right: Madam Jun tending to her plants in the courtyard of the hanok.

APPEALING TO THE YOUNG

For the younger generation, it is perhaps the pursuit of a unique lifestyle that draws them. A "mini-hanok" boom was sparked in 2007 after local media featured singles and young couples who had moved into 50-60 sq m hanok.

"Young people loving old culture – it's a very strange thing," said architect Hwang Doo-jin, amused by the trend. The hanok specialist said he had expected to work mostly with older clients when he ventured into hanok remodelling in 2004, but more than half are in their 30s and 40s.

He figures that these hanok owners have had some kind of overseas exposure. "They appreciate the past and are willing to invest in a piece of it."

Software engineer Jung Woo-ram, 37, fell in love with a mini-hanok near the main Gyeongbuk palace in central Seoul when he visited the area with his wife last year. "It was in a beautiful alley and when we found out it was for sale, we bought it immediately," he said.

The house is only 59 sq m but Mr Jung said he loves how the rooms are inter-connected and linked to the madang in the middle. "It's really great to have this outdoor courtyard space."

Mr Jung declined to reveal how much he paid. But an online check showed that a similar-sized hanok in the same Jongno district was on sale for 930 million won.

To maximise the living space, the couple made the hard decision to demolish the 80-year-old hanok and build anew.

"There's a beauty to the old house but we couldn't do remodelling due to a legal issue, so we decided to build a new house," he said.

REMODELLING VS REBUILDING

Purists like former British journalist David Kilburn, however, will lament the destruction of yet another hanok in his neighbourhood of Gahoe-dong in Bukchon, where two rows of well-preserved hanok draw busloads of tourists every day.

He and his Korean wife live in a hanok built in the 1930s by real estate developer Jeong Se-gwon, who played a key role in creating new enclaves of smaller hanok to counter the rapid erosion of Korean architecture and values under Japanese rule.

Mr Kilburn is of the opinion that owners should preserve a house and its history, not demolish it.

He claimed that "the idea of conservation and preservation does not exist in Korea", but added that he will keep his own house intact as long as possible.

Mr Taendler, however, noted that the Asian concept of architectural preservation, which can mean building anew in the exact same likeness, differs from that in the West. He also pointed out that there are very strict laws governing hanok remodelling as compared to rebuilding, which can be easier, as in the case of his client, software engineer Mr Jung.

But there are those who keep trying to push the envelope, like pioneer Mr Hwang whose unconventional designs – like a brick wall facade – upset purists but went on to win awards.

He maintained that government guidelines for hanok are too conservative and restrictive. "Historical authenticity is important, but so is creativity and innovation," he said.

More flexible rules for remodelling could also change the public's mind about hanok living.

Housewife Han Ju-hui, 45, used to think it would be inconvenient to live in a hanok. But after joining a walkabout in Bukchon led by Mr Hwang last October with her nine-year-old daughter, she said: "I think it is nice to renovate a historical house to fit modern life."

There is, however, also a generation who can never forget the hardships associated with hanok in the past, such as burning coal to heat the floors, and having to deliver food to individual rooms from the courtyard as there is no common dining hall.

Mr Hwang offered to get his mother a hanok but she refused. "She said she can't forgive hanok – she's perfectly happy living in an apartment."

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• Additional reporting by Dami Shin

SCAN TO WATCH
Traditional living with a twist
http://str.sg/hanok

Getting the conditions right for older workers



The Government should raise CPF contribution rates for older workers, and it should also peg the retirement age to health-adjusted life expectancy

Christopher Gee and Damien Huang

For The Straits Times

Singaporeans are not only living longer, they are increasingly working longer too. In the decade from 2007 to 2017, life expectancy for both men and women aged 65 in Singapore increased by 1.9 years to 84.1 and 87.5 years, respectively.

Over the same period, we estimate that the mean effective age of retirement for men and women rose by 3.1 and 3.6 years, respectively. On average, men are effectively remaining in the workforce until 66.1 years, with women retiring at 62.2 years.

This trend of living and working longer is the same across many developed countries. The average effective retirement age in the 36 member countries of the OECD has risen by 1.4 and 1.3 years for men and women respectively in the past 10 years.

LIVING AND WORKING LONGER

In many developed countries, people living longer and generally healthier lives is one reason for later retirement. Countries with generous defined benefit pension schemes, most notably in Scandinavia, have also raised pension withdrawal ages or reduced payouts because of worries about the sustainability of their pension funds.

Under the Retirement and Re-employment Act (RRA), Singapore's minimum retirement age is 62, and employers are not allowed to dismiss any employee below 62 on the basis of age. From 2012, employers have been required to offer re-employment to eligible workers aged up to 65 under the RRA and, from July 2017, to employees aged up to 67.

We believe the changes in Singapore's RRA and a generally tight labour market have led to the rising average effective age of retirement here. However, it is also likely that some seniors are remaining in the workforce longer because they need the income, as they do not have enough saved to retire completely, or lack familial financial support.

Whether the decision by seniors to continue working is voluntary or otherwise, getting the conditions right for older workers is clearly important at several levels.

For the individual, many studies on ageing have shown substantial health benefits from remaining in gainful employment over and beyond the monetary rewards. Employees nearing retirement age often express the desire to continue working – a departure from the desire to retire early that younger workers may imagine for themselves.

The continued independence of seniors relieves their families of responsibilities for care and financial assistance. At a national level, sustaining the productivity of seniors can somewhat offset the effects of lower birth rates and slower population growth on available labour supply.

DYNAMICALLY ADJUSTING RETIREMENT AND RE-EMPLOYMENT AGES

It is clear that, with increasing life expectancy, we need to enable older workers to work as long as they want. One way to ease this transition is to benchmark the RRA ages to health-adjusted life expectancy (Hale). Hale is the number of years the average person is expected to live in a healthy state, and this was 72.0 and 75.2 years for men and women, respectively, in Singapore in 2016.

Doing this would remove the policy decision-making process from the political arena, and make more explicit the connection between older workers' productivity and an indicator of their health-span.

Future changes to retirement or re-employment ages can then be announced every three years to keep up with changes in Hale.

This does not mean we need to increase both the retirement and re-employment ages concurrently.

Raising the retirement age to 65 would harmonise the minimum retirement age threshold with the CPF withdrawal eligibility.

Allowing longer re-employment contracts (now set at one year) that are benchmarked to Hale would better balance employers' needs with the acknowledgement that workers are living longer.

The Government should also continue to phase in changes to the retirement and re-employment ages. Phased introduction of these adjustments ensures that all parties have time to prepare for, and adopt other necessary improvements for the workplace to remain attractive to older workers.

FLEXIBLE WORK AND JOB MATCHING

While tripartite guidelines now encourage employers to adopt flexible working arrangements, the take-up appears low with only 330 companies participating as at early last year. This may require some hand-holding to match the needs of workers to employers in need. An example is the "Seniorjob" programme in Denmark, where the municipal government matches unemployed older workers of close to retirement age to jobs with shorter working hours.

To better assess the suitability of jobs, the Work Ability Index used in Australia and Finland recognises the social, environmental and physical factors affecting workers. This can be used to help seniors seeking jobs with more flexible working arrangements.

Indeed, one critical piece in our re-skilling and training eco-system is improving the way older workers are matched with suitable jobs, offering flexible work and having counsellors who are aware of the specific employment barriers for older workers. Lower-skilled, older workers may not be as savvy as younger ones in making use of technology to find jobs. Many job advertisements have moved from print media to online job portals.

OTHER SUPPORTIVE MEASURES

The Government has introduced various incentives to take on older workers. These include government grants for progressive companies willing to take on flexible work arrangements, explicit subsidies like the Special Employment Credit and Workfare where older, lower-skilled workers receive enhanced incomes.

However, we believe that CPF contribution rates for older workers, last lowered to increase the employability of such workers, should be raised to improve their retirement adequacy.

More can also be done to help employers overcome barriers and lower costs of hiring older workers through the implementation of portable medical insurance coverage, encouraging job redesign and introducing flexible work arrangements.

Most important of all is the need for a more positive outlook on employing older workers.

Adopting progressive approaches to retirement and re-employment that view older workers as mature age assets, not ageing health liabilities, will make workplaces more accommodating towards older workers.

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• Christopher Gee is senior research fellow and Damien Huang is research associate at the Institute of Policy Studies, which is hosting a forum on older workers on Jan 9.

People living longer and generally healthier lives is one reason for later retirement, but it is also likely that some continue working because they need the income or lack familial financial support. ST FILE PHOTO

Is this the end of the Age of Apple?

Kara Swisher

If anything, MedMen, on Santa Monica Boulevard in West Hollywood, California, looks just like an Apple store. It's decked out with blond wood tables on which a range of products are artfully displayed – the Puffco Peak portable vapouriser, an electronic Dosist vape pen, the latest issue of Ember magazine and, of course, so much weed, or marijuana, delivered in an astonishing variety of ways, from tinctures to gummy bears to cookies to just plain joints.

A crowd of customers is attended to by cheerful employees decked out in jaunty red hoodies and carrying iPads. "Let's be buds" urges a sign on one table. It certainly looks like it's going great at this chain of weed dispensaries. But – like a lot of businesses around the newly commercialised marijuana industry in California – MedMen is struggling. The latest quarter showed a net loss of US$66 million (S$90 million) on revenues of US$21.5 million. It had lost US$79 million the previous quarter. Not enough weed supply and too much expansion are among the reasons given for MedMen's problems, but the disconnect between the company's promise and reality made me think hard about some other terrible news this week: Apple's announcement that it was going to miss its projected revenue by billions of dollars this quarter.

Apple has hung the moon for investors for so long now that the idea of the company struggling sent the entire global stock market into a paroxysm of fear and plunging indices.

It is, to use an old California trope, going to be a real bummer for Silicon Valley.

What's happening in a fast-forward industry like tech is worrisome. Where is the next great boom of innovation going to come from, when even the strongest brands and products might not be sure things anymore?

Apple is not only a bellwether company in tech but also the most expertly managed one under Mr Tim Cook. He, of course, was preceded as chief executive by Mr Steve Jobs, who had brought the company back from the brink of bankruptcy in 1997. Since then, it has been all uphill, to the point in summer last year when Apple reached a US$1 trillion valuation – the first publicly traded American company to reach that high – with a price of US$207.39 a share.



An Apple store in Beijing. The last big innovation explosion – the proliferation of the smartphone – is clearly ending and there is not a major trend right now that will carry technology companies forward, the writer says. PHOTO: EPA-EFE

Today it's trading at around US$142, and analysts are predicting it will settle around US$135. Yipes. Part of the problem is the meltdown of the economy in China, where Apple products are popular, and the Trump administration's trade war.

But as journalist Ina Fried of Axios noted: "The problems Apple saw in China go far beyond just Apple. But Apple's iPhone problems extend far beyond China, too." Indeed.

The last big innovation explosion – the proliferation of the smartphone – is clearly ending.

There is no question that Apple was the centre of that, with its app-centric, photo-forward and feature-laden phone that gave everyone the first platform for what was to create so many products and so much wealth.

It was the debut of the iPhone in 2007 that spurred what some in tech call a "Cambrian explosion", a reference to the era when the first complex animals appeared.

There would be no Uber and Lyft without the iPhone (and later the Android version), no Tinder, no Spotify.

Now all of tech is seeking the next major platform and area of growth. Will it be virtual and augmented reality, or perhaps self-driving cars? Artificial intelligence, robotics, crypto currency or digital health?

We are stumbling in the dark.

Apple has dabbled in a lot of these areas, but it still makes its money by selling mobile phones and the accessories around them.

And while I love my AirPods and lose them weekly, my forking over US$159 to Apple for my sloppiness is not going to help compared with buying a cool new phone. That business has surely levelled off, as no one upgrades quite as quickly as they did before, because of everything from the price tag and being worried about a recession to the simple fact that the new phones don't offer that much more than the old ones.

There is no question that Mr Cook and his team have done a tremendous job taking advantage and managing this last cycle of innovation, but it's apparent that it's now winding down.

This is a big issue not only for Apple but also for all of tech.

There is not a major trend that you can grab on to right now that will carry everyone forward.

The last cool set of companies – Uber, Airbnb, Pinterest and, yes, Tinder – were created many years ago, and I cannot think of another group that is even close to as promising.

Well, rental scooters. OK, they're cool, but they are a derivative of the car rental business and are not going to make the big jumps in innovation that need to occur now.

How innovation happens is a much more delicate thing than people imagine, a dance involving money, opportunity, timing, execution and, most important, one great idea behind it all. Where is that next spark that will light us all up? NYTIMES

• Kara Swisher is editor-at-large for the technology news website Recode.

AsianWriters'Circle

The 'end of history' myth and the South's challenges

Capitalism has outlived political change and is the only certainty in a world of uncertainties

Lynn Ockersz



A casualty of the Syrian conflict. President Donald Trump recently ordered the withdrawal of US forces from Syria, even though there is no guarantee that the conflict there has been resolved to the satisfaction of those sections of the world community that have the interests of civilians at heart. PHOTO: AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

The collapse of the Soviet Union at the end of the 1980s proved a seminal event in the history of international politics and there was this pervasive euphoric sentiment that the stage was set for the everlasting enthronement of the capitalist system along with liberal democracy, worldwide.

The belief was initiated and sustained by sections of the Western academic world and enthusiastically supported by the political class of the same geographical hemisphere and some of its supportive counterparts in the global South.

This anticipated, wide-ranging transformation was summed-up in the catch phrase, "end of history".

Decades into this "brave new world", the more perceptive among us realise that the "end of history" is the stuff of myth and make-believe.

To be sure, the capitalist growth model has been adopted by almost all countries but it is an open question whether liberal democracy has stabilised itself all over the world.

That is, we may have capitalism but not necessarily liberal democracy. In fact, today, capitalism thrives alongside political authoritarianism in its most repressive manifestations.

Capitalism has vastly outlived political change down the ages.

This is the only relative certainty in a world riddled with uncertainties.

If the global South ever gets down to thinking collectively about its lot, it will realise that almost nothing that it campaigned for in the aftermath of "political independence" in the 1950s and 1960s, for instance, has been achieved substantially and to its entire satisfaction.

It need hardly be argued that individual and collective socio-economic goals, for example, have deftly eluded it.

Besides, security in its individual and collective forms is at best chimerical in these times when ultra-nationalism and individualism are tending to be glaringly conspicuous; tendencies the post-World War II order thought it had blunted.

It is in the area of security that the world finds itself to be most wanting.

The few decades leading to World War I were characterised by a degree of international peace but this applied largely to the West. This was probably because the Western world enjoyed a degree of consensual thinking on forms of governance, such as the constitutional monarchy and liberal democracy, and agreed largely on the need for the capitalist growth model, on issues relating to the economy.

Needless to say, insecurity marked the international system in the decades between the two world wars and, not surprisingly, nationalism and individualism came to be hallmarks of those times. Given these broad tendencies, it was only to be expected that international tensions would mount, leading eventually to a world war.

Compared to the present times, Southern states and their peoples enjoyed a degree of security during the Cold War decades.

This was mainly because the world had polarised itself into two ideological, military and economic blocs, broadly speaking, with the United States and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation on the one side and the Soviet Union and Warsaw Pact on the other.

These politico-ideological and military groupings balanced each other's power and influence in the international system from the end of World War II until the 1990s, when the decline of the Soviet Union began to be dramatically marked.

While it could be contended that part of the "end of history" prophecy has come true in that the capitalist system has come to be universally accepted, the rest is patently false.

Liberal democracy and accountable governance are conspicuous by their absence in most parts of the global South, although the latter hemisphere is seeing the rapid proliferation of emerging economies firmly on the capitalist path.

The glaring lack of accountable governance in most regions of the world is emerging as a major factor in growing international insecurity.

A tragic fallout from this lacuna in the South is increasing human insecurity.

Today, in the world's trouble spots, the number of civilian casualties of war is rising disconcertingly. This situation is not helped by a steep rise of the political right in the West.

This tendency is epitomised, for example, by the Trump phenomenon in the US.

The ultra-nationalist agenda of the Trump presidency is compelling the US to withdraw militarily from conflict and war zones where civilians are most exposed and vulnerable to the horrors of armed conflict. For instance, as this is being written President Donald Trump has ordered the withdrawal of US ground troops from Syria.

But there is no guarantee that the Syrian conflict has been resolved to the satisfaction of those sections of the world community that have the interests of civilians at heart.

Would the US now "cut and run" from Afghanistan as well?

This is a moot point.

Washington's reluctance to honour its commitments to war-affected civilians of the South runs parallel to its tendency to withdraw from multilateral economic and related forums which are seen as affecting US interests. It has already done so in the case of a couple of Obama era economic treaties that were seen as benefiting both South and North.

There is plenty in these unexpected developments that should set the South thinking.

It cannot expect a consensus of thinking among the big powers on questions affecting its security and economic interests.

The South will be valued by the big powers in these "brave new" times to the extent to which it keeps its markets open for trade and investment.

The South cannot expect to be protected by the big powers, be they from the North or South.

It could, though, expect the major powers to enter into economically exploitative relations with it and little else.

However, the South should think of re-grouping to the extent to which it could. South-South ties should be revived and made to prosper in the socio-economic field, in particular.

Ironically, as it goes along, the South is bound to realise that "Third World" development agendas of the days gone by are not completely irrelevant in these times when the rest of the world could not care less for its most vital interests.

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TheViewFromAsia

Hopes and fears over a bumpy 2019

Asia News Network writers give their take on priorities for their countries, this year. Here are excerpts.

China, US should improve ties

Editorial
China Daily, China

The start of a new year always generates fresh hopes and expectations, and this year is no exception. The leaders of China and the United States have fuelled the seasonal sense of anticipation by raising hopes that the tensions between the two countries will be eased.

As long as both sides bear in mind the larger picture of bilateral ties and opt for dialogue and negotiations to resolve their differences, there is no reason why their relations cannot continue the general trend of increasing engagement that has benefited both countries over the past 40 years.

And at a time when the world is undergoing profound changes and facing rising challenges and uncertainties, a rapport between Washington and Beijing would also be a welcome signal that they recognise that no country can be an island unto itself in today's interconnected world.

It is to be hoped the two sides can demonstrate the political wisdom that will enable them to deliver on the welcome sense of optimism that prevails as we enter 2019.

Work on growth potential

Editorial
The Yomiuri Shimbun, Japan

Will the Japanese economy, which is now stranded, be able to regain pace and put itself on a track towards stable growth?

The nominal gross domestic product (GDP) has increased by about 150 trillion yen (S$1.9 trillion) over the 30 years of the Heisei era, while the ratio of registered job offers to registered job seekers, which shows the employment situation, is at a record-high level.

Yet the potential growth rate, which was higher than 4 per cent 30 years ago, has been hovering low, at around 1 per cent, for more than five years. Economic momentum is weak.

Deregulation and growth strategies will foster new industries and enhance productivity. The government must strive to help realise such a private sector-led propping-up of the economy.

The current phase of economic expansion, which has been continuing since the second Cabinet of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe was launched in December 2012, is expected to renew the post-war record length of expansion this month. Yet the basic tone of expansion is slow, with little sense of reality. It stems from sluggishness in consumer spending, which accounts for the greater part of the GDP.

In order to boost consumption, continued high-level pay increases are essential. Fortunately, companies' business performance is brisk in general, enjoying record-high levels of profit.

The government needs to create an environment that makes it easier for women and the elderly to work and also steadily push ahead with steps to accept more foreign workers in Japan.

The biggest concern for Japan's economy in 2019 is the fact that signs of a slowdown in the global economy are getting stronger. If trade friction between the United States and China intensifies, the impact on the world's economy will grow. The situation surrounding Britain's upcoming departure from the European Union has also descended into chaos.

It is impossible to dismiss the risk that the yen will gain further strength and capital will leave developing nations due to factors such as movements in US monetary policy. This situation will require the government and the Bank of Japan to be even more vigilant.

Acid tests for Thailand

Editorial
The Nation, Thailand

Thailand faces two major challenges in 2019 – conducting a general election and chairing Asean.

Mishandling either task would invite serious damage to both the country and the wider region.

Junta chief General Prayut Chan-o-cha has made a bad start in tackling the first challenge, repeatedly announcing an election date only to break his pledge, and the world is now watching to see whether Thailand will actually return to the fold of civilian rule this spring.

Thailand raised eyebrows in the region by proposing that the year's first Asean summit be held in late June, rather than early in the year. The Asean chair usually hosts summits twice a year, the first one around March or April followed by another in November. But the schedule has been put back to make way for the Thai election, to establish a new government to lead the regional grouping.

The region is now waiting to see whether the election delivers the kind of political turmoil that ruined the Asean summit of 2009 in Pattaya.

Tackle the distress

Ivanpal Singh Grewal
The Star, Malaysia

The New Malaysia is in distress.

Parti Keadilan Rakyat vice-president Rafizi Ramli put it best when he said that many Malay voters, especially those in rural areas, voted for Pakatan Harapan because they felt Pakatan could better handle Malaysia's perennial cost-of-living problem.

The drop in the price of palm oil and rubber has created a lot of economic hardship for rural Malaysians who rely on commodities.

The lack of cohesive action on the part of the government to address this and the removal of aid programmes designed to help them cope in a low commodity price cycle has exacerbated the feelings of anger and distrust.

Also, the rationalisation of the many welfare schemes for farmers and fishermen has deprived them of a source of income which, though not ideal, they have become accustomed to.

Many rural folks, who are very price sensitive, were taken in by the promise of lower prices (after abolishing GST and tolls). The non-materialisation of (some) promises has also contributed to the unease they have about the new government.

The Pakatan administration is very new; it is only six months old. I believe their immediate task should be to clean up the administration, enact important institutional reforms, repeal oppressive laws and put the economy on the right footing.

Democracy on trial

B. Herry Priyono
The Jakarta Post, Indonesia

Democracy on trial; this is surely the pathos of the nation in 2019.

The trial will unfold not because the 2019 elections are at stake, but because of the threat from a menace capable of wrecking the nation's fabric and the precarious growth of democracy.

The name of the menace is religious tribalism, bred by political entrepreneurs of a peculiar type.

Religious tribalism is a form of populism.

The way it works depends on which tribal sentiments are most ripe to be exploited in particular cultural soils to mobilise voters in electoral races.

What is ironic is not that populism discards electoral politics but, rather, that it plays on atavistic pathos that makes electoral politics degenerate into its ugliest state.

No example is more conspicuous than the gubernatorial election in Jakarta in 2017, where the race rotted into a war of religious sentiments.

A shattered aftermath was only to be expected, that is, a society injured by a climate of heightened distrust, making the scheme of cooperation more difficult.

It is this breed of unscrupulous political entrepreneurs who have brought this country's politics to the ugliest low. We will have more of them in the coming months.

There's still time for BJP

Vinod Saigal
The Statesman, India

Is Prime Minister Narendra Modi's ruling Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) losing the plot? Yes it is. The reasons are many.

It started with the scale of the BJP victory in the 2014 election. Such an enormous mandate by the people of India should have led to humility over the trust the electorate had reposed in them. This did not happen. Instead, there was arrogance writ large on the faces of the winning side right from the top leadership to the rank and file of the BJP.

The second biggest mistake made by the BJP leadership was not to confer upon a decimated Congress the status of opposition leader. The latter was only one seat short of the minimum required for the status. Yet the BJP parliamentary party did not look ahead to realise that they did not have a majority in the Upper House.

It could hamper many important Bills from being passed. Leaders who appreciate that electoral fortunes can change and have been changing would realise the need for bringing the opposition into the fold.

There are still over 150 days before the 2019 election. Much will depend on Mr Modi to undo the damage that has been done.

• The View From Asia is a compilation of articles from The Straits Times' media partner Asia News Network, a grouping of 23 news organisations.

BIG PICTURE

WEATHER
Windy, with passing showers in the afternoon.
High 33 deg C **Low** 24 deg C
24-hr PSI as of 5pm yesterday: 44 to 55 (Moderate)

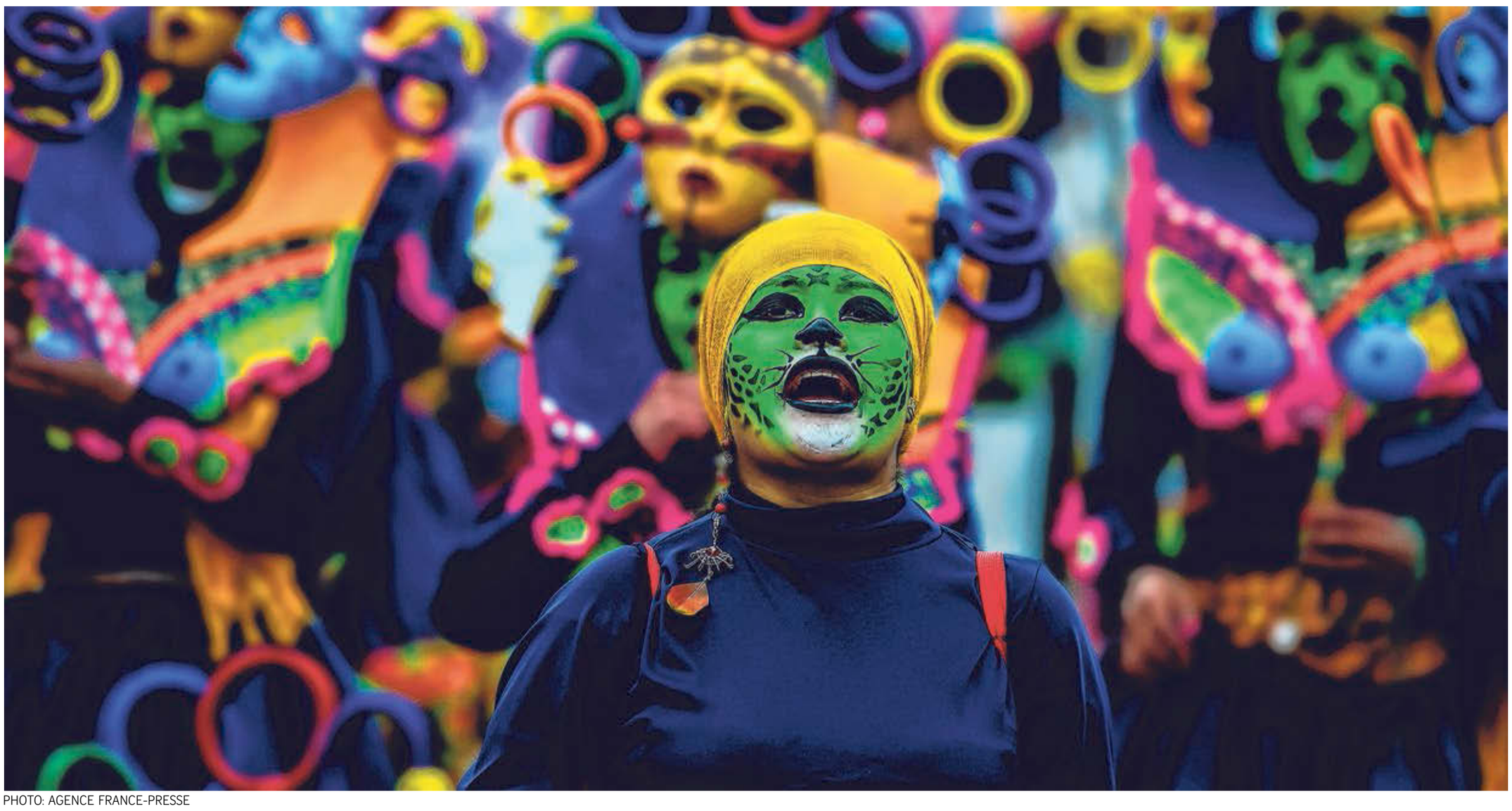


PHOTO: AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Cultural diversity in living colour

When it comes to championing racial harmony, the Colombians do it in style during the Black and White Carnival.

The annual event draws tens of thousands of revellers to the city of Pasto.

The largest festival in the south-western region of the country has its origins in a mix of Andean, Amazonian and Pacific cultural expressions. It is celebrated every year from Jan 2 to 6 in Pasto, and has been on Unesco's list of intangible cultural heritage since 2009.

It started off as an occasion for African slaves to hold their rituals and festivals.

Today, it symbolises equality of all people and races.

On Black day, participants of all ethnicities paint each other black.

Similarly, on White day, people paint each other white.

There is a lot of music, dancing in the streets, elaborate floats and colourful costumes as the people celebrate their cultural diversity and channel their desire for unity among people of different races.

THE STRAITS TIMES
SINGAPOREAN OF THE YEAR 2018
PRESENTED BY UBS

Who among these 11 finalists is your choice for The Straits Times Singaporean of the Year 2018 award?

This award, in partnership with UBS for the fourth year running, seeks to honour the positive impact made by Singaporeans and celebrate the triumph of the human spirit. Each of these nominees has a powerful story that will resonate with, and inspire, all of us. Read more about them at str.sg/soty2018 and tell us who should be the winner by Jan 15, 6pm.

Cast your vote now at
str.sg/soty18vote
Terms and conditions apply



Harbhajan Singh
The veteran nurse led a team of more than 100 nurses in the 2003 fight against Sars, the severe acute respiratory syndrome. Today, at the age of 78, Harbhajan Singh continues to work at the very hospital he first joined as a young man aged 25.



Annabelle Kwok
At 26, NeuralBay founder Annabelle Kwok has already made her mark in artificial intelligence. She also wears many other hats as mathematician, hardware hacker, sportswoman, arts performer and do-gooder.



Teo Yee Ming
Hai Sing Catholic School teacher Teo Yee Ming has led the school's robotics team from obscurity to success on the world stage. The school team has won the world's most prestigious robotics competition four times.



Elizabeth Tan
Entrepreneur Elizabeth Tan grew her father's shoe shop into a global chain with 50 stores. She is also a humanitarian who set up Sight To Sky, a charity which organises annual mobile eye clinics in India, Pakistan and Nepal.



Bjorn Low
From a small social enterprise, Bjorn Low's Edible Garden City is now a thriving business. It designs and builds food gardens, supplies greens to restaurants, and trains and employs people from vulnerable or marginalised segments.



Kenneth and Adeline Thong
The Thongs not only open their house to young people without a roof over their heads to live in for free, but they also recreate a home within a house for them. Both left their jobs to be present in the lives of young people.



Siti Noor Mastura
Siti Noor Mastura rose above childhood poverty and overcame the odds to launch two non-profit groups. One distributes halal groceries to the poor and the other promotes honest discussions between people of different faiths.



Nizar Mohamed Shariff and Free Food For All
In 2014, Nizar Mohamed Shariff set up Free Food For All, a charity that provides free cooked meals for the needy. The charity cooks up to 100,000 meals a year for 3,000 elderly or low-income residents living in rental flats.



Douglas Yeo and Poh Kok Wee
Veteran diver Douglas Yeo, 50, risked his life to help with the evacuation of the last five Thai boys who were trapped in a cave. Age also did not deter Poh Kok Wee, 57, from helping scout for alternative cave entrances to reach the boys.



Teo You Yenn
Sociology researcher Teo You Yenn published a book of essays on the lives of people who live in HDB rental flats. This Is What Inequality Looks Like is a bestseller that has sparked a national conversation on socio-economic inequality in Singapore.



Robert Chew
Robert Chew, 69, has donated blood a total of 184 times. He started when he was 18 years old and donates blood three to four times a year. He has drained his body of blood 18 times over his lifetime as a donor.

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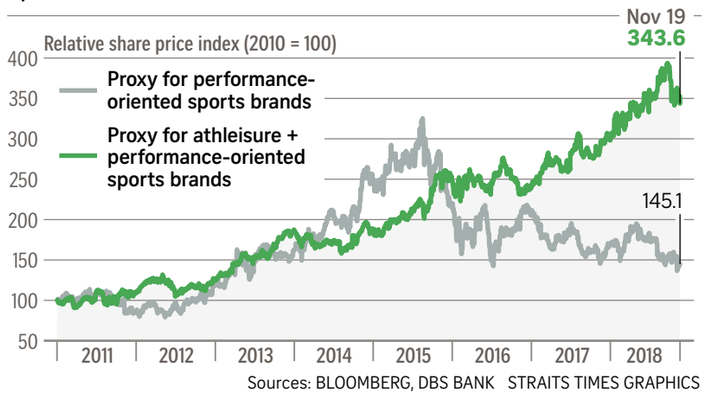
C | BUSINESS

1,300

THE US-DOLLAR LEVEL THAT THE GOLD PRICE HAS BREACHED, EXTENDING A NEW YEAR RALLY **C2**

The rise of athleisure

Share-price data shows that athleisure brands fared better than labels that primarily make performance sportswear.



Sources: BLOOMBERG, DBS BANK STRAITS TIMES GRAPHICS

Watch rising global trend of athleisure, DBS exec says

Need to cater for millennials' consumption patterns as spending power grows, he notes



A crowd outside the adidas Originals store at Pacific Plaza. The evolution of business models to focus on athleisure – a combination of "athletics" and "leisure" – has fuelled a sector dominated by giants like Nike and adidas. PHOTO: ST READER

Ng Jun Sen
Business Correspondent

Young people in snaking lines waiting to buy the latest Yeezy sneakers in Orchard Road are not the only ones hyped up about trendy streetwear – investors love them too.

Long-term investors should watch the rising trend of "athleisure" globally and in Singapore this year, said DBS Bank chief investment officer Hou Wey Fook.

Athleisure – a combination of "athletics" and "leisure" – is a category of lifestyle apparel and equipment that caters to health-minded and fashion-conscious consumers.

Sports-related spending among those born between 1980 and 2000 has grown in recent years, said Mr Hou at a DBS investment roundtable discussion yesterday.

As millennials' spending power grows, companies have to cater for their distinct behavioural and consumption patterns, he said.

Referring to the throng of buyers who queued overnight in Orchard Road last year for limited-edition adidas NMD shoes, Mr Hou said they are technologically savvy and social media is second nature to them.

"Does adidas make a lot of money launching these limited editions? No. But it knows these people will create a buzz on social media, enhancing the brand," he said.

The share prices of athleisure-oriented sports brands have outperformed those of brands focusing solely on sports performance, with their price trends diverging from each other in 2016, according to data from Bloomberg and DBS.

Globally, sales are expected to rise to US$350 billion (S$477 billion) by next year as athleisure gains market share from the non-athletic apparel segment, said a report by Morgan Stanley.

This evolution of business models to focus on athleisure has fuelled an industry dominated by global giants like Nike, adidas and Puma. Other brands like Fila and Champion have also grown in popularity.

Last year, British sportswear retailer JD Sports opened two outlets in Singapore, while American retailer Foot Locker opened three.

Mr Hou said such firms have adopted a scarcity model through limited-edition releases and collaborations with celebrities. The Yeezy line of footwear was a partnership between adidas and American rapper Kanye West, for example.

Traditional luxury apparel labels are taking note, said DBS senior investment strategist Dylan Cheang, and "are increasingly riding on this trend through collaborations with sportswear brands".

Mr Jonathan Fong, co-founder of Singapore's annual sneaker convention Sole Superior, said the fashion trend has spread beyond millennials – even older people wear chunky Fila shoes or Champion hoodies.

While celebrity endorsements and similar marketing trends are not new, Mr Fong noted that street fashion has now become mainstream. "Around 20 years ago, (streetwear label) Supreme was parodying Louis Vuitton. But in 2017, LV collaborated with Supreme," he said.

Besides athleisure, Mr Hou highlighted global healthcare as another investment area for this year, as governments spend more on healthcare. There are also long-term investment opportunities in China's technology and e-commerce firms, despite the selldown of Chinese tech stocks last year, he said.

But geopolitical factors, such as a full-blown trade war between the United States and China as well as a chaotic Brexit, could upset investor portfolios this year. Despite that, DBS believes athleisure is likely to be highly resilient in the long term. Unlike luxury goods, athleisure is "more of a staple and less of a luxury", it said in its investment report.

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Aussie, NZ dollars stage comeback on greenback

Despite both currencies making a remarkable rebound, they still nurse losses on the yen

SYDNEY • The Australian and New Zealand dollars celebrated a remarkable comeback on their US counterpart yesterday, as dismal economic data stoked speculation of a U-turn on US interest rates.

It got an added fillip when China's Commerce Ministry said Beijing and Washington would hold trade talks at the vice-ministerial level on Monday and Tuesday, stirring hopes of a thaw in the tariff war.

The Aussie dollar was back at US$0.7016, after a wild 24 hours saw it collapse almost three full cents to US$0.6715 only to fetch up higher than when it started.

The kiwi dollar had returned to US$0.6694, having been as low as US$0.6591 at one stage on Thursday when a "flash crash" had sent it and the Aussie dollar careening lower.

Both still nursed losses on the yen which had surged on Thursday when a host of long-held short positions were squeezed out amid a mad dash to safe havens. The Aussie dollar was last at 75.37 yen, up from a deep trough around 72.26 but still down 3 per cent for the week.

The rebound on the US dollar came as data there showed a shock slowdown in manufacturing activity amid a pullback in new orders and concerns about tariffs.

Investors reacted by pricing in a real possibility the Federal Reserve might have to reverse course and cut rates, even though it was still projecting two more hikes this year.

"Markets now think the next move in rates is down with a rate cut 50 per cent priced by December and fully priced by April 2020," said Mr Tapas Strickland, a market strategist at NAB.



The Aussie dollar was back at US$0.7016, after a wild 24 hours saw it collapse almost three full cents to US$0.6715, while the kiwi dollar returned to US$0.6694, having been as low as US$0.6591 on Thursday. PHOTO: BLOOMBERG

PESSIMISM

Markets now think the next move in rates is down with a rate cut 50 per cent priced by December and fully priced by April 2020. Whether this pessimism continues for the rest of 2019 will largely depend on whether there is a near-term resolution to the (Sino-US) trade war.

MARKET STRATEGIST TAPAS STRICKLAND

"Whether this pessimism continues for the rest of 2019 will largely depend on whether there is a near-term resolution to the (Sino-US) trade war."

Treasury yields also fell sharply, undermining the US dollar rate advantage.

The Australian two-year yield is now only 56 basis points short of its US counterpart, having been as much as 90 basis points lower just a couple of months ago.

That narrowing came even as Australian yields plunged to their lowest since late 2017 at 1.8 per cent, a huge swing from September's top of 2.16 per cent.

Yields on 10-year debt dropped 10 basis points to 2.18 per cent, depths not visited since October 2016.

Ten-year bond futures held gains of almost 19 ticks for the week at 97.82, which would be its best weekly performance since late 2017.

Taking their cue from the US, local investors added to wagers the Reserve Bank of Australia (RBA) might also be forced to cut rates this year.

Futures imply around a 50-50 chance there will be a quarter-point cut in the 1.5 per cent cash rate by December.

The RBA has long said the next move will likely be higher, but equally has shown no inclination to hike any time soon.

Markets in New Zealand have likewise narrowed the odds on a rate cut there, with bank bill futures surging to contract highs.

Yields on two-year debt have dived to 1.68 per cent, putting them below the 1.75 per cent cash rate. REUTERS

Gold strengthens as investors turn to it as safe haven

NEW YORK • Gold pierced the US$1,300 level to extend a New Year rally yesterday. Investors flocked to the metal with global equities in retreat, signs of a slowdown stacking up, and the oldest of havens showing its mettle as exchange-traded funds draw in increased flows.

Futures spiked as much as 0.4 per cent to US$1,300.40 an ounce on the Comex, the highest price since June last year, and were at US$1,296.50 at 6.36am in London. Spot prices were not far behind, hitting as much as US$1,298.60.

Silver also rose to the highest level since July last year.

Gold has become the go-to commodity in the opening days of this year as investors contemplate a deteriorating worldwide outlook and factor in fewer, if any, Federal Reserve interest rate hikes this year.

On Thursday, a gauge of US manufacturing sank by the most since the 2008 recession, a day after Apple cut its revenue outlook, fuelling concern that the trade war with China is taking a bigger-than-expected toll on growth.

The partial US government shutdown has also spurred a risk-off mood.

"This rally in gold is based on investors increasingly realising that gold is 'safe money'," Mr Rainer Michael Preiss, an executive director at Taurus Wealth Advisors, said before prices broke US$1,300. He cited the potential downturn in the global economy, possible central bank policy mistakes and the rising US debt burden among factors spurring demand.

Earlier this week, a report showed a contraction in China's manufacturing, while factory gauges in Italy and Poland also sank.

With equities faltering, global gold-backed ETF holdings added 67 tonnes last month, and in the opening days of the year rose further to the highest since June.

The rally past US$1,300 is considered an important psychological hurdle that could spur additional buying, according to analysts, including Mr George Gero at RBC Wealth Management.

"The market has major worries about the economy, the stock market and political events" including Brexit, said Mr Gero. "If investors keep looking for havens, the price could reach US$1,350," he said. BLOOMBERG

SAFE BET

This rally in gold is based on investors increasingly realising that gold is 'safe money'.

MR RAINER MICHAEL PREISS, an executive director at Taurus Wealth Advisors.

Global M&A value rose in 2018, though deal count fell: Report

Cheap finance and pressure on firms to consolidate helped drive up the value of global mergers and acquisitions (M&A) last year, although the deal number fell for the first time since 2010.

The value of M&A deals in 2018 rose 11.5 per cent to US$3.53 trillion (S$4.81 trillion) from 2017, making it the third-largest year on record since 2001, according to deal intelligence service Mergermarket yesterday.

The average deal size of US$384.8 million was at its second-highest, just below the US$400.3 million peak attained in 2015.

This was in part due to the presence of 36 mega deals – those larger than US$10 billion in value – last year, six more than in 2017.

Companies under pressure to consolidate often found themselves competing for targets of the highest quality, pushing up valuations, the report noted.

"Comcast's eventual US$51.5 billion Sky takeover was a case in point, where the Pennsylvania telecommunications giant ended up paying considerably more than its starting offer in an effort to beat rival bidder 21st Century Fox," the report stated.

Other notable mega deals included Takeda Pharmaceutical's US$79.7 billion takeover of British-listed Shire, and T-Mobile's US$60.8 billion merger with Sprint Corporation.

Another key factor in the mega frenzy was the continued availability of cheap financing due to historically low interest rates. This provided the capital needed to fund bidding wars, particularly in the private equity space, the report added.

Two sectors in the spotlight were energy, mining and utilities, with a value of US$673 billion, and construction, which hit a new decade high of US$116.5 billion, driven by private equity plays and infrastructure bids.

That said, 2018 also saw the number of deals struck fall for the first time since 2010 to 19,232 after rising steadily for close to a decade.

"With so many market-moving factors fluctuating throughout the year, M&As have understandably had a somewhat ambivalent 2018," noted Mergermarket research editor (Americas) Elizabeth Lim.

"Intensifying trade tensions, political instability and increased regulatory scrutiny took their toll over the year."

Closer to home, activity in the Asia-Pacific ex-Japan was robust last year, with the region recording 4,036 deals for a combined total of US$717.4 billion, a 2.6 per cent increase in deal value but 42 fewer than in 2017.

The largest regional deal was the US$16 billion acquisition of Indian online retailer Flipkart by retail giant Walmart.

Additionally, Asia-Pacific outbound M&A was buoyant, while inbound M&A experienced mild growth. The value of outbound transactions reached US$160 billion last year, posting a 52.4 per cent increase over 2017.

Foreign investment into Asia-Pacific ex-Japan reached US$122.5 billion, or a 4.4 per cent increase from the preceding year.

Industrials and chemicals was the most attractive sector last year by both value and volume, while the pharmaceutical, medical and biotech sector was also in focus with a dramatic uptick in the fourth quarter to help the sector reach an annual value of US$41.3 billion, up 63.8 per cent from 2017.

Private equity firms remained active, despite buyout activity dipping, with 514 deals worth US$124.1 billion in 2018 – a 3.4 per cent decrease by value from a year ago.

This was largely due to a weak fourth quarter when value and deal count both shrunk.

The largest buyout deal last year was the US$14 billion acquisition of Chinese payment company Ant Financial by a consortium led by GIC.



Workers removing snow at a liquefied natural gas facility of ENN Group in Changsha, in China's Hunan province, earlier this week. A final investment decision could be taken on more than 60 million tonnes per annum of LNG capacity this year, well above the previous record of about 45 million tonnes in 2005. PHOTO: REUTERS

Record LNG production set to get nod this year

A record amount of liquefied natural gas (LNG) production is expected to get the green light in 2019 amid strong global demand, especially from China, analysts said.

A final investment decision (FID) could be taken on more than 60 million tonnes per annum of LNG capacity this year, well above the previous record of about 45 million tonnes in 2005 and triple last year's 21 million tonnes, Wood Mackenzie's research director for global gas and LNG Giles Farrer said.

The new capacity would bulk out the pipeline of gas set to come on stream in coming years, adding to the more than 320 million tonnes of LNG shipped globally last year, according to shipping data in Refinitiv's Eikon.

"If you have seen the potential demand for LNG, you have seen costs where they are now... That is motivating companies to push projects forward and motivating buyers to come forward to support some of these projects," Mr Farrer said.

Front runners this year include the US$27 billion (S$36.8 billion) Arctic LNG 2 project by Russia's Novatek, at least one project in Mozambique and three in the United States, WoodMac said in a report to its clients.

The three potential US projects are Qatar Petroleum's Golden Pass joint venture with ExxonMobil Corp and ConocoPhillips, Venture Global LNG's Calcasieu Pass project, and Cheniere Energy's Sabine Pass Train 6, the consultancy said.

Canada's Woodfibre LNG project, developed by Singapore-based Pacific Oil and Gas, may also get the go-ahead in 2019, WoodMac said.

New projects typically take several years to develop, with many of those under consideration likely to be ready to ship gas in the early 2020s if approved.

A final investment decision on Golden Pass is expected by this month, while a decision on Sabine Pass Train 6 is expected in the first quarter and one on Calcasieu Pass is expected in the first half.

Amid a plethora of potential new production from Russia, Australia, East Africa and the US, top 2018 LNG exporter Qatar is also expanding.

"Now is a good time to invest. If you look at industry costs, they have really come off a cliff from two to three years ago. So if you're investing now, you're investing in the bottom of the cost cycle," said Mr Farrer.

Other projects awaiting FID include Train 7 of Nigeria LNG, and a three-train expansion in Papua New Guinea, although some projects are widely expected to be pushed into the 2020s.

Huge increases in China's demand growth as part of a programme to shift households and factories from coal to gas, increased LNG import dependency in Europe, and a backlash against dirtier coal are driving optimism in the industry.

LNG supply will already grow by an estimated record 40 million tonnes, or 13 per cent, this year, potentially putting pressure on Asian LNG prices, currently around US$9 per million British thermal units.

Most of this year's new supply will come from the US with new trains at Cameron LNG, Corpus Christi LNG, Elba Island LNG and the Freeport LNG start-up, said Mr Edmund Siau, an analyst at FGE.

In terms of demand, China continues to post strong growth while Europe could also see increases after years of stagnation, Mr Siau said.

But the US-China trade war which threatens global growth may in turn pull down oil and gas prices and delay or cancel FIDs, analysts said. REUTERS



The 208,443 sq ft Flynn Park is within walking distance of the Pasir Panjang MRT station and the Canopy Walk – an elevated boardwalk linking Kent Ridge Park to Hort Park. ST FILE PHOTO



Marketing agent JLL says the Choon Kim House site could be developed into a boutique hotel or student hostel, subject to change of use and planning approval. PHOTO: JLL

Flynn Park, Choon Kim House give collective sales another shot

Both sites, which did not seal a deal the last time, eyeing lower reserve prices now

Two more condominium blocks are having another shot at a collective sale, this time hoping to throw in the lure of a lower reserve price.

Both the developments – Flynn Park and Choon Kim House – have signed up JLL as marketing agent.

The freehold 72-unit Flynn Park, off Pasir Panjang Road, has a minimum price of $363.8 million.

Owners have been collecting signatures since the July cooling measures to get an 80 per cent mandate to lower the reserve price to $325 million. They are at 75 per cent now.

After factoring in an estimated development charge of about $24.5 million, the original reserve price translated to $1,331 per square foot per plot ratio (psf ppr).

If a sufficient number of owners agree to lower the reserve, the site would go for about $1,198 psf ppr.

The first tender closed in June without a buyer.

Flynn Park, which spans 208,443 sq ft and has an allowable gross plot ratio (GPR) of 1.4, is near Pasir Panjang MRT and the Canopy Walk – an elevated boardwalk linking Kent Ridge Park to Hort Park.

The current tender closes at 3pm on Jan 29.

$325m

The lower reserve price Flynn Park is aiming at. An 80 per cent mandate from owners is required.

$50m

The lowered reserve price for Choon Kim House, from $55 million previously.

Meanwhile, more than 80 per cent of the owners at freehold Choon Kim House in Upper Serangoon Road have agreed to lowering the reserve price of the commercial and residential site from $55 million to $50 million.

The new reserve price translates to a land rate of $1,173 psf ppr or $1,149 psf ppr after factoring in the 10 per cent bonus GFA (gross floor area) for the residential component, subject to approval.

The property was launched for sale last April at the $55 million asking price but the tender closed without a deal.

Choon Kim House comprises 20 commercial units and 10 apartments with 19 basement car parking spaces in a 14,988 sq ft site.

It has a GPR of 3 and could support a total GFA of 47,661 sq ft, including the 10 per cent bonus area if it gets the authorities' nod.

It is 700m from Serangoon bus and MRT interchange while Paya Lebar Methodist Girls', Maris Stella High, St Gabriel's Primary and CHIJ Our Lady of Good Counsel schools are nearby.

JLL said: "Choon Kim House also offers an appealing opportunity for organisations... looking to own and occupy their building for naming rights and brand awareness."

It added that it would also suit "an investor or developer who wishes to explore other forms of development like a boutique hotel or student hostel, subject to change of use and planning approval".

The tender closes at 2.30pm on Jan 30.

Study: Top bosses in UK earn 133 times more than workers

LONDON • The year has just begun, but by yesterday afternoon the CEOs of Britain's biggest companies would have already earned as much since Jan 1 as the average worker will make in all of 2019.

The FTSE 100 bosses reached this milestone around 1pm London time (9pm Singapore time), after an 11 per cent jump in pay, according to a report by CIPD, an association for human resource professionals, and the High Pay Centre, a research group. The CEOs surpassed female employees' full-year earnings even earlier, by around 8.30am.

Despite government efforts to make executive pay more transparent and rules giving shareholders a voice on compensation, the gap between CEOs and employees remains stubbornly high. The FTSE chiefs now earn 133 times more than workers, up from 47 times in 1998, based on their median pay.

"To raise living standards, we need growth and innovation, but also to ensure that growth is fairly distributed," said Mr Luke Hilyard, director of the High Pay Centre.

The disparity in Britain reflects a broader rise in income inequality across much of the developed world. New rules came into force on Jan 1 that will require all publicly listed UK firms with more than 250 employees to disclose their pay ratios starting next year and justify compensation levels for their top bosses.

There has been increasing criticism of soaring compensation. Last year, Mr Jeff Fairburn quit as Persimmon's CEO after a backlash against his £75 million (S$129.5 million) pay and bonus package.

The gulf in the US is even more glaring, with a CEO-to-worker pay ratio of 312:1 in 2017, according to an August report by the Economic Policy Institute. Average CEO compensation, based on the largest 350 companies, was 18 per cent higher than the previous year. BLOOMBERG



PORSCHE

Hang Seng



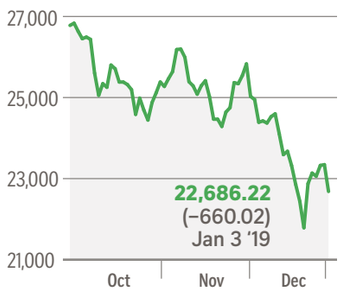
Shanghai Comp



Nikkei 225



Dow Jones



BullsAndBears

S'pore shares end week in positive territory

STI rebounds, with Keppel Corp and Jardine C&C among standouts

Lynette Tan

Local shares rebounded strongly yesterday to end what has been a fraught week on a higher note.

The brighter mood among investors sent the Straits Times Index (STI) advancing 1.5 per cent or 46.35 points to 3,059.23 and 0.19 per cent ahead for the week.

This came on the back of declines of around 1 per cent in the previous two sessions.

Stocks across Asia started the day on a weaker footing, after Wall Street's sell-offs overnight, but were boosted in the afternoon after news that the US and China would hold vice-ministerial-level negotiations on trade in Beijing next week.

Most Asian stocks closed up on the day, except in Australia and Japan. Japanese markets were shut on Wednesday and Thursday and resumed trading yesterday.

In Singapore, gainers powered past losers 264 to 142, with 1.29 billion shares worth $900.2 million changing hands.

All three local banks rose, with DBS up 0.87 per cent to $23.29, United Overseas Bank adding 1.63 per cent to $24.38 and OCBC Bank putting on 1.27 per cent to $11.17.

Among industrials, Keppel Corp, up 2.24 per cent to $5.94, and Jardine Cycle & Carriage, ahead 1.7 per cent to $35.88, stood out.

OCBC Investment Research has maintained its "buy" call on Keppel Corp with a target price of $7.25, on the back of news that Keppel Land China is developing a new residential site in Chengdu.

Analyst Low Pei Han said Keppel has a good track record in Chengdu, with six residential projects there.

Keppel is also growing its commercial portfolio in Beijing and its offshore marine unit is expected to continue its recovery, said Ms Low.

DBS Equity Research initiated coverage on Jardine Cycle & Carriage with a "buy" call and a $43.10 target price – an almost 24 per cent upside on the stock's opening price of $34.80. DBS said the share is a "South-east Asia proxy", offering "exposure" to regional economies.

Tech stocks, which came under pressure on Thursday following Apple's first revenue caution in almost 12 years, regained ground. Venture Corp closed 1.48 per cent higher at $13.71 and semiconductor player UMS Holdings advanced 2.7 per cent to 57 cents.

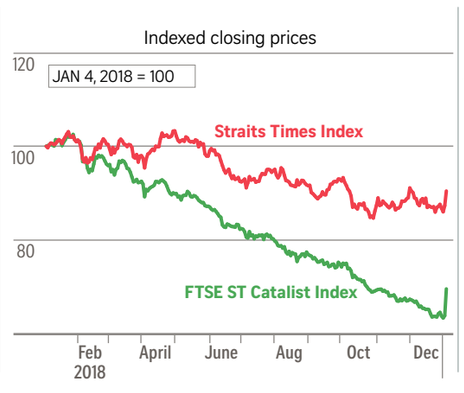
Creative Technology rose 6.76 per cent to $3.79, a stark contrast to Thursday last week when it plunged 16.75 per cent and triggered a query.

The firm said yesterday that it has started taking orders for the first headphones with built-in technology based on its Super X-Fi system.

tanlyn@sph.com.sg

DAILY

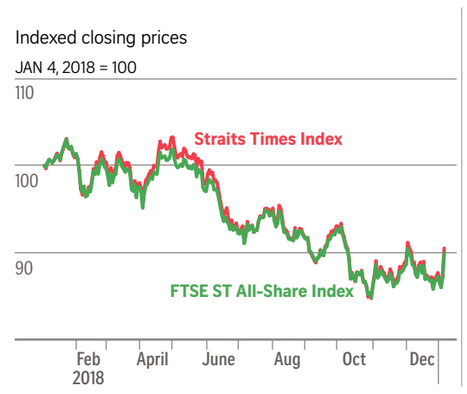
Straits Times Index
Jan 4, 2019
3,059.23 ▲
+46.35 (+1.54%)
Current streak
1 day
Day high
3,059.23
Day low
2,993.42
52-week high
3,615.28 (May 2, 2018)
52-week low
2,966.45 (Oct 30, 2018)



FTSE ST Catalist Index
Jan 4, 2019
306.20 ▲
+2.44 (+0.80%)
Current streak
1 day
Day high
306.57
Day low
303.65
52-week high
490.47 (Jan 29, 2018)
52-week low
303.76 (Jan 3, 2019)

DAILY

FTSE ST All-Share Index
Jan 4, 2019
742.75 ▲
+10.08 (+1.38%)
Current streak
1 day
Day high
742.75
Day low
728.74
52-week high
877.87 (Jan 24, 2018)
52-week low
722.91 (Oct 30, 2018)



China to cut banks' reserve requirement ratios, taxes

BEIJING • China will cut banks' reserve requirement ratios (RRRs), taxes and fees, Premier Li Keqiang said yesterday, as the world's second-largest economy shows further signs of cooling.

The measures will also include targeted RRR cuts aimed at supporting small and private companies, Mr Li was quoted as saying in a statement on the website of the Chinese government.

China slashed reserve requirements four times last year to free up more funds for banks to lend and analysts expect three to four more cuts this year.

Beijing will also step up "countercyclical adjustments" of macro policies and further cut taxes and fees, Mr Li said.

He made the comments at a meeting with officials of the country's banking and insurance regulator after visiting Bank of China, Industrial and Commercial Bank of China and China Construction Bank.

China reported on Monday that factory activity shrank last month for the first time in more than two years, highlighting the challenges facing Beijing as it seeks to end a bruising trade war with Washington. The government has also ramped up spending on infrastructure to rekindle sluggish demand and investment.

The government maintains last year's economic growth will be on target at around 6.5 per cent, slowing from 6.9 per cent in 2017. But analysts see a further deceleration this year, even if a trade deal with the United States is reached. REUTERS

Straits Times Index stocks

52-WEEK HIGH	52-WEEK LOW	COMPANY	CURRENCY TRADED	LAST SALE	+OR-	'VOL '000	GROSS YIELD %	P/BV
286	245	Ascendas Reit		263	+6	15983	6.1	1.3
205	161	CapitaCom Trust		180	+5	17438	4.8	1
388	298	CapitaLand		306	+2	4067	3.9	0.7
232	195	CapitaMall Trust		230	+2	7849	4.9	1.1
1360	780	CityDev		808	+14	1088	2.2	0.7
251	196	ComfortDelGro		215	+3	7376	4.8	1.8
3128	2265	DBS Grp		2329	+20	3905	6.1	1.3
968	767	DairyFarm USD	US	910	+10	464	2.3	-
141	85.5	Genting Sing		99	+2	22982	3.5	1.6
39	22.5	Golden Agri-Res		24.5	+1	15872	3.3	0.6
42	23	HPH Trust USD	US	24.5	unch	2314	10.7	0.4
744	588	HongkongLand USD	US	660	+20	2248	3	0.3
6958	5580	JMH USD	US	6857	+165	261	2.3	0.7
4149	3155	JSH USD	US	3749	+80	213	0.9	0.4
4142	2766	Jardine C&C		3588	+60	664	3.2	1.7
892	567	Keppel Corp		594	+13	2608	3.7	0.9
1404	1036	OCBC Bank		1117	+14	4227	3.3	1.2
585	455	SATS		466	+7	1115	3.9	3.2
850	672	SGX		719	+4	1541	4.2	8.2
1184	914	SIA		927	+2	1047	4.3	0.8
292	231	SPH		236	+5	5953	5.5	1.1
370	319	ST Engineering		347	+1	2728	4.3	5.1
360	243	Sembcorp Ind		257	+7	3282	1.9	0.7
365	283	Singtel		290	+4	20327	7.1	1.6
94.5	57.5	ThaiBev		61 cd	+2	15262	1	3
3037	2380	UOB		2438	+39	2488	4.1	1.2
938	591	UOL		608	+8	1176	2.9	0.5
2965	1320	Venture Corp		1371	+20	1195	4.4	1.8
331	297	Wilmar Intl		313	+4	3775	3.2	0.9
166	84	YZJ Shipbldg SGD		127	+4	16895	3.5	0.9

FTSE ST Large & Mid-Cap Index stocks

52-WEEK HIGH	52-WEEK LOW	COMPANY	CURRENCY TRADED	LAST SALE	+OR-	'VOL '000	GROSS YIELD %	P/BV
286	245	Ascendas Reit		263	+6	15983	6.1	1.3
127	105	Ascott Reit		109	unch	1834	6.5	0.9
78.5	59	Bumitama Agri		64	+1	90	1.2	1.5
185	143	CDL HTrust		147	+1	2737	-	1
205	161	CapitaCom Trust		180	+5	17438	4.8	1
388	298	CapitaLand		306	+2	4067	3.9	0.7
232	195	CapitaMall Trust		230	+2	7849	4.9	1.1
169	133	CapitaR China Tr		139	+1	575	7.3	0.9
1360	780	CityDev		808	+14	1088	2.2	0.7
251	196	ComfortDelGro		215	+3	7376	4.8	1.8
3128	2265	DBS Grp		2329	+20	3905	6.1	1.3
968	767	DairyFarm USD	US	910	+10	464	2.3	-
78	59	Far East HTrust		61	unch	1066	-	0.7
197	150	First Resources		154	+1	473	4.4	2
236	211	Frasers Cpt Tr		218	+1	1357	5.5	1
119	101	Frasers L&I Tr		102	unch	3880	6.7	1.1
141	85.5	Genting Sing		99	+2	22982	3.5	1.6
39	22.5	Golden Agri-Res		24.5	+1	15872	3.3	0.6
234	167	GuocoLand Ltd		177	unch	100	4	0.5
42	23	HPH Trust USD	US	24.5	unch	2314	10.7	0.4
744	588	HongkongLand USD	US	660	+20	2248	3	0.3
6958	5580	JMH USD	US	6857	+165	261	2.3	0.7
4149	3155	JSH USD	US	3749	+80	213	0.9	0.4
4142	2766	Jardine C&C		3588	+60	664	3.2	1.7
59	44.5	Kep Infra Tr		48.5	-0.5	3757	7.7	1.7
892	567	Keppel Corp		594	+13	2608	3.7	0.9
133	108	Keppel Reit		115	unch	8500	5	0.8
215	151	M1		208	unch	2627	5.5	3.9
273	170	Man Oriental USD	US	191	-2	238	1.6	1.4
172	152	Mapletree Com Tr		170	+2	4414	5.3	1.1
213	184	Mapletree Ind Tr		195	+4	3907	6	1.3
138	118	Mapletree Log Tr		130	+1	11415	5.9	1.2
128	107	Mapletree NAC Tr		115	+1	5627	6.5	0.9
84	73	NetLink NBN Tr		77.5	+0.5	12214	-	1
1404	1036	OCBC Bank		1117	+14	4227	3.3	1.2
215	136	OUE		142	unch	105	2.1	0.3
92.5	64.5	OUE HTrust		67	+0.5	409	-	0.9
250	157	Olam Intl		172	+2	587	4.4	0.9
60.8	28	Oxley		28.5	unch	2454	5.3	0.8
306	256	ParkwayLife Reit		263	+1	842	5.1	1.5
121	98	Raffles Medical		109	unch	1752	2.1	2.6
585	455	SATS		466	+7	1115	3.9	3.2
850	672	SGX		719	+4	1541	4.2	8.2
1184	914	SIA		927	+2	1047	4.3	0.8
337	220	SIA Engineering		239	+6	1478	5.4	1.8
292	231	SPH		236	+5	5953	5.5	1.1
109	98	SPHREIT		101	unch	1126	5.5	1.1
370	319	ST Engineering		347	+1	2728	4.3	5.1
360	243	Sembcorp Ind		257	+7	3282	1.9	0.7
281	149	Sembcorp Marine		157	+4	2673	1.3	1.4
58	39	Silverlake Axis		42.5	+1	7359	7.1	6.2
147	88.5	SingPost		92.5	+1	3617	3.8	1.2
365	283	Singtel		290	+4	20327	7.1	1.6
299	158	StarHub		173	+2	1841	9.2	5.3
78	63.5	StarhillGbl Reit		67.5	-0.5	1172	6.7	0.7
225	163	Suntec Reit		181	+2	3370	5.5	0.9
94.5	57.5	ThaiBev		61 cd	+2	15262	1	3
10.2	3.7	Thomson Medical		7.6	+0.2	26053	-	2.8
3037	2380	UOB		2438	+39	2488	4.1	1.2
938	591	UOL		608	+8	1176	2.9	0.5
2965	1320	Venture Corp		1371	+20	1195	4.4	1.8
331	297	Wilmar Intl		313	+4	3775	3.2	0.9
244	183	Wing Tai		194	+3	380	4.1	0.5
166	84	YZJ Shipbldg SGD		127	+4	16895	3.5	0.9
191	116	Yanlord Land		123	+1	889	5.5	0.5

FTSE ST Small-Cap Index stocks

52-WEEK HIGH	52-WEEK LOW	COMPANY	LAST SALE	+OR-	'VOL '000	GROSS YIELD %	P/BV
145	129	AIMSAMP Cap Reit	135	+1	170	7.6	1
71	48	Accordia Golf Tr	51.5	unch	580	7.5	0.6
90.5	74	Ascendas-hTrust	77.5	unch	238	-	0.8
119	99	Ascendas-iTrust	104	-1	533	5.9	1.2
60	12.2	Asian Pay TV Tr	13.6	+0.4	7112	47.8	0.2
67	48	Banyan Tree	58	+0.5	554	1.7	0.8
279	115	Best World	274	unch	1824	1.5	9.8
88	76	Boustead	79	-0.5	26	3.8	1.2
126	79.5	BreadTalk	81.5	-0.5	164	8.6	2.2
658	521	Bukit Sembawang	565	-1	21	3.2	1.2
88.5	65.5	Cache Log Trust	69.5	unch	1866	10.4	1
57	39.5	Centurion	41	unch	30	6.1	0.7
171	104	China Aviation	106	unch	965	4.2	0.9
47.5	29.5	China Everbright	30.5	unch	113	1.6	0.6
165	90.5	China Sunsine	122	+2	1059	2.5	1.4
107	64	Chip Eng Seng	66	+1.5	3396	6.1	0.5
53.5	31.5	Cosco	34	+1.5	5806	-	1.5
700	271	Delong	608	-6	39	-	0.6
28	17.5	Duty Free Intl	19.6	+0.6	266	9.4	1.3
79	67.5	EC World Reit	69.5	unch	158	8.7	0.8
59.5	47	ESR-REIT	51	unch	2346	7.5	0.9
142	92	First Reit	98.5	-0.5	156	8.7	1
155	134	Frasers Com Tr	137	-1	993	7	0.9
82.5	66.5	Frasers HTrust	70.5	+0.5	422	-	0.9
28.5	16.4	Geo Energy Res	17.8	+0.2	562	5.6	1.1
91	70.5	HRnetGroup	78.5	+0.5	29	2.9	2.4
70	52	Health Mgt Intl	55.5	+0.5	42	0.6	5.3
279	73	Hi-P Intl	86	+0.5	3295	29.1	1.3
283	252	Hong Leong Fin	256	+2	100	5.1	0.6
82.5	71	IREIT Global	72.5	unch	1	8.2	1
42	18.3	Indofood Agri	19	-	-	-	0.2
79.5	43	Japfa	75.5	+2.5	1830	0.7	1.4
84.5	49	KSH	50.5	+1	9	4.4	0.9
86.9	53	Kep-KBS Reit USD	64	+1	1152	-	0.5
148	128	Keppel DC Reit	137	+1	1229	5.2	1.3
188	132	Keppel T&T	186	-1	1650	1.9	1.2
11.9	7	KrisEnergy	7.7	+0.6	16559	-	0.9
79.5	44.5	Lian Beng	47	unch	130	4.8	0.3
42.5	18	Lippo Malls Tr	19.1	+0.8	1949	18	0.7
55.5	30	MM2 Asia	30	-0.5	1737	-	1.7
98.5	69.5	ManulifeReit USD	81.5	+0.5	1367	6.8	0.7
121	95	Metro	100	-1	32	5	0.6
32	5	Noble	8.1	susp	-	-	-
66.9	45	OUE Com Reit	45.5	unch	437	10.3	0.5
68	54	PEC	56	unch	49	3.6	0.6
46	17	POSH	17.2	+0.1	114	-	0.5
66	44.5	Q&M Dental	49.5	-0.5	107	3.3	3.5
117	55.5	QAF Ltd	59.5	+1	33	8.4	0.7
86.5	70	RHT HealthTrust	72	-0.5	352	6.3	0.9
124	96	Riverstone	118	+3	97	2	3.9
55	22	SIIC Environment	28	unch	633	-	0.5
45	38	Sabana Reit	40	unch	164	8.3	0.8
119	90	Sheng Siong	107	unch	301	3.1	5.9
25.5	12	Sino Grandness	12.8	+0.2	539	-	0.2
72	56	SoilbuildBizReit	58	unch	323	9.8	0.9
129	80.5	Tianjin ZX USD	82	-1	519	-	0.7
50	32.5	Tuan Sing	35.5	+0.5	226	1.7	0.4
136	54	UMS	57	+1.5	2003	8.8	1.3
112	58.5	Valuetronics	67.5	+1.5	1290	6.8	154.6
17.8	8.3	Ying Li Intl	11.7	+0.1	6257	-	0.3
55	24	Yoma Strategic	35.5	+1	2577	0.7	0.9
37.5	16.1	Yongnam	18.3	unch	494	-	0.4

ETFs

52-Week High	52-Week Low	Counter	Last Sale	+/-	Vol ('000)	Last Quote Buy	Last Quote Sell
116.9	110	ABF SG Bond ETF	113.7	-0.2	90	113.6	113.9
99	82.5	CIMB APAC Div US$	US82.5	-	-	83.4	84.1
1176	626	CIMBASEAN40 US$	US934	-	-	951	959
12953	11025	GLD US$	US12261	+70	78	12233	12261
1453	1330	IS ASIA HYG S$D	1340	-5	0	1340	1343
1095	970	IS ASIA HYG US$	US986	-4	11	983	988
1082	1002	IS Asia BND US	US1024	+9	1	1026	1029
1016	467	IS MS INDIA US$	US823	-	57	822	825
108.5	94.4	Lion-Phillip S-REIT	98.9	+0.9	135	98.8	98.9
375	302	Nikko AM STI ETF	309	+2	77	311	313
100.6	98.8	NikkoAM SGD IGBond ETF	99.9	-0.1	2	99.8	100.1
88.8	76.3	NikkoAM-STC A_REIT US$	US80.3	-	-	81.1	81.4
148.2	104.7	NikkoAM-STC Asia REIT	110.1	+1	284	110.5	110.8
103	99	PHILSING INC	100.2	+1	89	99.7	100.3
106.4	93.2	Phll Ap Div Reit US$	US95.8xd	-1.7	10	95.6	96
366	300	STI ETF	310.6	+4.3	564	310.6	311
4256	3373	XT ASX200 US$	US3390	-	-	3425	3470
685.5	375.1	XT MSBrazil US$	US476.1	-	-	496.1	502.4
2208	1470	XT MSCHINA US$	US1478	-20	0	1494	1524
8530	6252	XT MSKorea US$	US6434	-	-	-	6280
221	154.9	XT MSPHILS US$	US180.1	+2.8	40	181	186
645	530	XT MSPacXJp US$	US551	-	-	543	552
3113	2532	XT MSTaiwan US$	US2554	-	-	2425	2460
5292	4210	XT S&P500 US$	US4472	-86	0	4465	4520
4044	2850	XT Vietnam US$	US2858	-19	6	2766	-

Gainers

BY CENTS

	CLOSE	UP	%
JMH USD	6857	224.7	2.5
JSH USD	3749	108.9	2.2
Jardine C&C	3588	60.0	1.7
Isetan	380	45.0	13.4
UOB	2438	39.0	1.6
HongkongLand USD	660	27.2	3.1
Creative	379	24.0	6.8
DBS Grp	2329	20.0	0.9
Venture Corp	1371	20.0	1.5
CityDev	808	14.0	1.8

BY PERCENTAGE

	CLOSE	%	UP
China Haida	2.7	200.0	1.8
AGV	2.6	73.3	1.1
Santak	8.3	56.6	3.0
C&G Env Protect	1.5	50.0	0.5
Seroja Inv	3.2	39.1	0.9
Ossia Intl	12	33.3	3.0
HiapSeng	5.9	20.4	1.0
Rex Intl	6.5	18.2	1.0
KTL Global	6.7	17.5	1.0
MMP Resources	0.7	16.7	0.1

Losers

BY CENTS

	CLOSE	DOWN	%
Great Eastern	2473	-25.0	-1.0
China Intl	21.5	-20.5	-48.8
Delong	608	-6.0	-1.0
RE&S Holdings Ltd	16.5	-6.0	-26.7
Raffles Infrastructu..	26	-6.0	-18.8
UOL	680	-5.0	-0.7
BRC Asia	122	-4.0	-3.2
Man Oriental USD	191	-2.7	-1.0
Citic Envirotech	34	-2.5	-6.8
Memtech Intl	76.5	-2.5	-3.2

BY PERCENTAGE

	CLOSE	% DOWN	
China Intl	21.5	-48.8	-20.5
The Place Hldg	1.5	-40.0	-1.0
Arion Ent	0.8	-27.3	-0.3
RE&S Holdings Ltd	16.5	-26.7	-6.0
Jasper Inv	0.4	-20.0	-0.1
P5 Capital	0.4	-20.0	-0.1
Raffles Infrastructu..	26	-18.8	-6.0
CH Offshore	8.2	-18.0	-1.8
Natural Cool	6	-17.8	-1.3
Courage Inv	4.1	-12.8	-0.6

Most active

	VOLUME
Ezion	115,894,500
Rex Intl	63,353,200
Thomson Medical	26,053,200
Genting Sing	22,982,900
Jiutian Chemical	21,612,000
Singtel	20,327,100
Jasper Inv	18,680,500
Spackman	18,226,500
CapitaCom Trust	17,438,500
YZJ Shipbldg SGD	16,895,600
Market volume	1,288,910,000

	VALUE ($)
DBS Grp	90,219,744
UOB	60,264,464
Singtel	58,329,978
OCBC Bank	46,975,829
Ascendas Reit	41,750,910
CapitaCom Trust	31,094,402
JMH USD	24,240,156
Jardine C&C	23,814,254
Genting Sing	22,554,044
YZJ Shipbldg SGD	21,250,136
Market value	838,225,000

Price and volume movers

	VOL	CLOSE($)	CHANGE	+/-
TSH	250.0	0.018	-	-
Sinjia Land	-	0.010	-	-
ChinaKangdaFood	5.0	0.071	+0.001	+1.43
KLW	0.2	0.004	-	-
Santak	0.3	0.083	+0.030	+56.60
Hiap Seng	3.0	0.059	+0.010	+20.41
Edition	-	0.007	-	-
Metal Component	720.0	0.025	+0.003	+13.64
MYP	-	0.145	-	-
Silkroad Nickel	-	0.425	-	-

Shows the stocks with the highest combination of price change and of daily activity relative to the three-month average volume

Bonds

Company	Last Sale	+or-	Vol ('000)
CapMallTrb3.08%21022	101.4	unch	41
CityDev NCCPS	105.1	unch	5
DBS Bk 4.7% NCPS	10500	unch	1
FPTrea 3.65%n220522	101	+0.2	89
Hyflux 6% CPS	6537	susp	-
UE Pref	190	-	-



Credit Suisse says that it was deceived by its own staff in the fund-raising scandal, which allegedly involved Mozambique's former finance minister. PHOTO: REUTERS

$2b

Amount in US dollars Mozambique was allowed to borrow for maritime projects and coastline protection.

$200m

At least this amount in US dollars was diverted for bribes and kickbacks, prosecutors said.

Ex-Credit Suisse bankers charged in loan scandal

Trio accused of cheating US investors who provided funds to Mozambique for dubious projects

WILMINGTON (Delaware) • Three former Credit Suisse Group bankers were charged in New York with defrauding US investors who helped provide more than US$2 billion (S$2.7 billion) in loans to Mozambique, thrusting another global bank into a fund-raising scandal.

Andrew Pearse, a former managing director at the bank; Surjan Singh, a former managing director of its global financing group; and Detelina Subeva, a former vice-president in that unit, were arrested in London on Thursday and face extradition to the US, according to prosecutors in Brooklyn, New York.

The underlying indictment also names Manuel Chang, Mozambique's former finance minister, as a defendant. He was arrested on Dec 29 in South Africa and has said he will fight extradition.

The charges focus on deals allowing Mozambique to borrow US$2 billion for maritime projects and coastline protection, according to the indictment. But the funds were themselves plundered, with at least US$200 million diverted for bribes and kickbacks, prosecutors said.

The indictment alleges that Credit Suisse's bankers helped officials in one of the world's poorest countries go deep into debt for legally dubious projects.

The loans were concealed from foreign donors, who suspended aid after they were revealed, leading the southern African nation to default on its debts. The deal generated fees for the Swiss bank, which was not named as a defendant and said it was deceived by its own staff.

In a similar case, US prosecutors last year charged former Goldman Sachs Group bankers with conspiring in bribery tied to fund raising for Malaysian wealth fund 1Malaysia Development Berhad. Like Credit Suisse, the bank has denied knowledge of the scheme, blaming rogue executives.

In the charges unveiled on Thursday, prosecutors accused Pearse, Singh and Subeva of withholding information from Credit Suisse's compliance staff as the firm began arranging US$622 million in loans to a government-controlled entity that was supposed to help protect the nation's territorial waters.

Credit Suisse's due diligence files included a report on an executive at another company involved in the project, labelling him a "master of kickbacks", and a regional executive at the bank rejected doing a deal with him, according to the charges. But Pearse and Singh did not relay that to compliance, which "failed to pursue its inquiry further", according to the charges.

The trio also removed some of the bank's conditions from the loan, such as a requirement that Mozambique's attorney-general vouch for the validity of the government's guarantee, prosecutors said.

Chang signed papers on behalf of the government of Mozambique to guarantee the debts if the projects did not pay off, according to the indictment.

Pearse, Singh and Subeva were released on bail in London.

The International Monetary Fund suspended lending to Mozambique after it found out about the deals. BLOOMBERG

CompanyBriefs

Zhuhai Yinlong Energy

The US$20 million (S$27 million) investment by Chinese electric-bus manufacturer Zhuhai Yinlong Energy (YLE) in a unit of struggling electronics engineering firm Dragon Group International is back on, albeit with a few changes after a renegotiation.

Dragon was placed on the Singapore Exchange's watch list on March 4, 2015 and will have to delist from the mainboard after it failed to meet the financial exit criteria before the deadline several times. The original proposed subscription of shares by YLE and Sputnik Energy, first announced in 2017, was not fulfilled and/or waived before the long-stop date of April 2018, so the agreements had been terminated.

The new share subscription agreement entered into on Thursday will see YLE subscribe for nearly a billion shares of Dragon's unit EoCell, which represents 40 per cent of EoCell's new enlarged share capital for US$20 million.

A management company to be incorporated, representing the key management of EoCell, will also subscribe for about half a billion shares to represent up to 20 per cent of the enlarged EoCell share capital, at a nominal consideration.

Sputnik Energy, which holds 7 per cent of EoCell with Dragon holding the balance 93 per cent, will no longer subscribe for EoCell shares.

EoCell is a joint venture between the company and Sputnik Energy, formed in 2015 to explore opportunities in the lithium ion battery and energy storage market.

RHT Health Trust

RHT Health Trust is asking holders of $120 million of 4.5 per cent notes due on Jan 22 for a six-month extension to their maturity date to accommodate delays in its asset sale to Fortis Healthcare. RHT Health Trust, which operates India-based healthcare assets, is seeking note holders' consent to push the maturity date to July 22, with redemption at maturity set at 100.45 per cent of the principal amount. Consenting note holders will receive a one-time 1 per cent consent fee.

Repayment of the notes was to be funded by the sale of RHT Health Trust assets to Fortis Healthcare. However, due to a delay in the buyout of Fortis by IHH Healthcare, the purchase agreement between Fortis and RHT would consequently be delayed, with the long-stop date now set at March 26. As the asset sale to Fortis is unlikely to be completed by Jan 22, RHT is seeking to extend the notes' maturity.

The meeting to seek note holders' consent will take place on Jan 21. DBS and UOB are acting as joint solicitation agents.

SPH Reit declares DPU of 1.34 cents for first quarter

Retail landlord SPH Reit has declared a distribution per unit (DPU) of 1.34 cents for the first quarter, unchanged from a year earlier.

The DPU will be paid out on Feb 15, it announced yesterday.

Net property income dipped 1 per cent year on year to $41.79 million in the three months to Nov 30, mainly due to lower revenue from Paragon mall.

Property operating expenses rose 6.5 per cent on the back of higher marketing expenses while gross revenue edged up 0.6 per cent to $53.81 million.

Paragon recorded a positive rental reversion of 10.1 per cent for new and renewed leases for the first quarter, which translated to 8.4 per cent of the mall's net lettable area. The overall portfolio recorded a positive rental reversion of 9.7 per cent. The Reit's properties had an occupancy of 99.2 per cent as at Nov 30.

Ms Susan Leng, chief executive of SPH Reit Management, said the full contribution from Figtree Grove Shopping Centre in Australia is expected in the second half of the year.

1%

Dip in net property income year on year, to $41.79 million in the three months to Nov 30

The trust completed the acquisition of an 85 per cent stake in the centre for around A$175.1 million (S$167.9 million) last month. Its joint-venture partner, Moelis Australia, holds the remaining stake.

Ms Leng added: "The property is an established sub-regional shopping centre in Wollongong, New South Wales, and is a strategic fit with SPH Reit's portfolio of quality assets.

"This acquisition provides SPH Reit with the opportunity to further create value and continue to deliver long-term returns for unit holders."

New loans were taken up last month to finance the acquisition, lifting the Reit's gearing ratio post-acquisition to about 30 per cent from 26.3 per cent as at Nov 30.

SPH Reit units closed unchanged at $1.01 yesterday.

Interbank currency rates

Jan 4

Currencies	Against S$ Bid	Against S$ Offer	Against US$ Bid	Against US$ Offer
S$/US$ to one unit of foreign currency:				
Australian dollar	0.9570	0.9573	0.7028	0.7030
Canadian dollar	1.0123	1.0124	0.7434	0.7434
Euro	1.5538	1.5541	1.1411	1.1412
NZ dollar	0.9115	0.9117	0.6694	0.6695
Sterling pound	1.7235	1.7242	1.2657	1.2661
US dollar	1.3617	1.3618	-	-
S$/US$ to 100 units of foreign currency:				
Chinese renminbi	19.8374	19.8415	14.5681	14.5700
Danish kroner	20.8071	20.8118	15.2802	15.2826
Hong Kong dollar	17.39	17.39	12.7688	12.7689
Indian Rupee	1.95	1.95	1.4311	1.4313
Indonesia rupiah	0.0095	0.0095	0.0070	0.0070
Japanese yen	1.2618	1.2622	0.9266	0.9269
Korean won	0.1211	0.1213	0.0889	0.0891
Malaysian ringgit	32.89	32.93	24.1546	24.1779
New Taiwan dollar	4.4122	4.4127	3.2402	3.2403
Norwegian krone	15.7284	15.7321	11.5505	11.5524
Philippine peso	2.5932	2.5954	1.9044	1.9059
Saudi riyal	36.3014	36.3089	26.6588	26.6624
Swedish krona	15.1551	15.1630	11.1295	11.1345
Swiss franc	138.0894	138.1136	101.4096	101.4199
Thai Baht	4.2500	4.2530	3.1211	3.1230

Source: OCBC

Government securities

GOVERNMENT BONDS — **Jan 4**

Period	Issue code	Coupon rate (%)	Maturity	Close Bid	Day's High	Day's Low
2-Year	NY05100N	3.250%	01-Sep-20	102.23	0.00	0.00
5-Year	NX13100H	2.750%	01-Jul-23	103.46	103.65	103.49
10-Year	NX18100A	2.625%	01-May-28	104.17	105.05	104.25
15-Year	NZ13100V	3.375%	01-Sep-33	112.68	113.80	112.75
20-Year	NZ16100X	2.250%	01-Aug-36	97.84	98.95	98.95
30-Year	NA16100H	2.750%	01-Mar-46	104.76	106.35	105.50

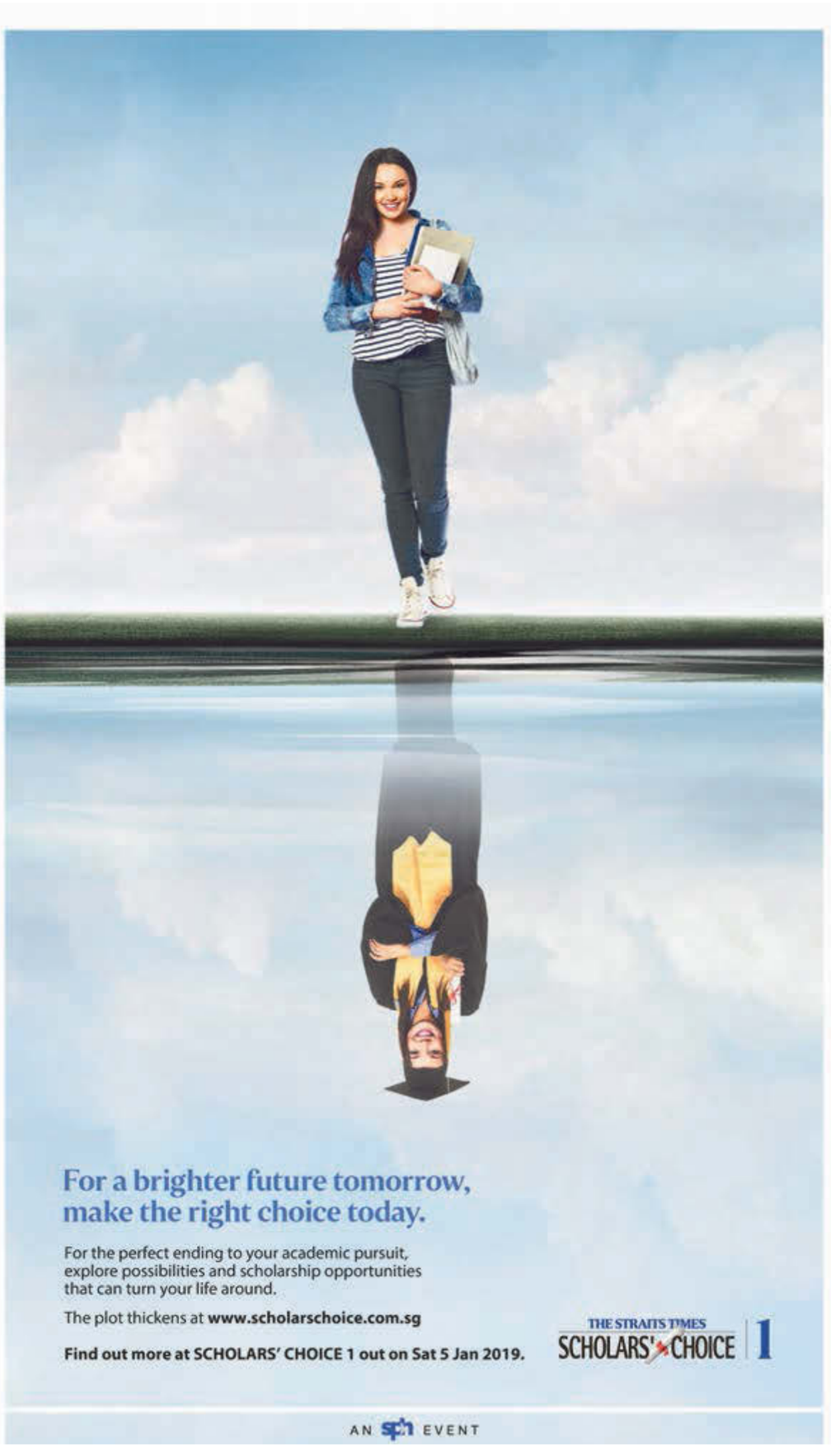
Note: Based on latest issue

Source: Monetary Authority of Singapore

MSCI INDICES

Jan 3	Index	In local curr % dy Change	In local curr % yr Change
World Preliminary	1429.9	-0.8	-0.8
EAFE Preliminary	1001.6	-0.4	-0.6
Europe Preliminary	1393.7	-0.7	-0.8
Australia	1138.5	1.4	-0.2
Austria Preliminary	504.1	0.5	1.2
Belgium Preliminary	911.5	0.3	-0.4
Canada Preliminary	1816.2	-0.9	-0.8
Denmark Preliminary	7486.2	0.0	1.1
Finland Preliminary	649.0	-0.9	-0.6
France Preliminary	1671.1	-1.6	-2.5
Germany Preliminary	834.7	-1.3	-1.1
Greece Preliminary	43.9	1.6	1.1
India	1237.9	-1.1	-2.0
Indonesia	7088.4	0.5	0.2
Ireland Preliminary	179.8	0.1	0.4
Israel Preliminary	233.7	0.5	1.3
Italy Preliminary	620.7	-0.3	-0.2
Japan	893.2	0.0	0.0
Korea	588.5	-1.1	-2.6
Malaysia	577.1	0.4	-0.8
Netherlands Preliminary	1430.2	-1.6	-1.9
New Zealand	132.3	-0.3	-0.3
Norway Preliminary	2823.1	1.1	1.4
Pakistan	358.5	-1.4	0.4
Philippines	1298.9	2.5	2.9
Portugal Preliminary	80.8	0.1	0.1
Singapore	1565.3	-0.9	-1.8
Singapore Free	336.5	-0.9	-1.8

Source: MSCI



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of our Late Parents & Brother

Allahyarhamah
Hjh. Che' Eyah
Bte Hj. Jadi



Departed: 09/11/1992
(26th Anniversary)

Allahyarham
Hj. Aziz Bin Sam



Departed: 26/08/1995
(23rd Anniversary)

Allahyarham
Hj. Rosli Bin Hj Aziz



Departed: 05/01/2018
(1st Anniversary)

Just a token of love's devotion. That our hearts still long for you. Especially so on this day.

Dearly missed & fondly remembered by

Daughters : ROZIAH BTE HJ. AZIZ
ROSINIMAH BTE HJ. AZIZ (Family)
ROSYATI BTE HJ AZIZ (Family)
Son : RAZALI BIN HJ. AZIZ (Family)

Siblings To:
Late Allahyarham HJ. ROSLI BIN HJ. AZIZ

---

*"My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever." **Psalm 73:26***



Jennie Tan

Age: 84

Was called home to the Lord on 4 January 2019.
Dearly missed and fondly remembered by loved ones.

Husband: Richard Low Kee Sing (deceased)

Sisters:
Jessie Tan
Joyce Tan (deceased)
Diana Tan
Dora Tan
Tan Kok Cheng

Brothers:
Tan Kok Thye
Tan Kok Hearn (deceased)

Son:
Low Siew Yang Kerwin

Daughter-in-law:
Chia Guat Hwee Cecilia

Daughters:
Low Siok Mui Anita
Low Siok Lin Lena

Sons-in-law:
Mirek Rozbicki (deceased)
Richard Cook

Grandchildren:
Sarah Low Shi En
Aleksander Rozbicki
Paulina Rozbicki

And all relatives and friends.

Wake at Singapore Funeral Parlour Level 4, Lotus Room, 91 Tampines Link, Singapore 528746.
Nightly services will be held at 8.00pm.
Cortege leaves on Monday 7 January 2019 at 4.15pm for Mandai Crematorium Hall 2 for cremation at 5.15pm.

---

*"Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever." **Psalm 23:6***



John Cynthia Jeyamanee (Mrs Selva)

Age: 71

Was called home to be with the Lord on 3 January 2019.
Dearly missed and fondly remembered by loved ones.

Husband: K. Selvanayagam (deceased)

Daughters:
Caroline Manonmani
Cheryl Sharmani

Son-in-law:
Govindarajulu Naidu

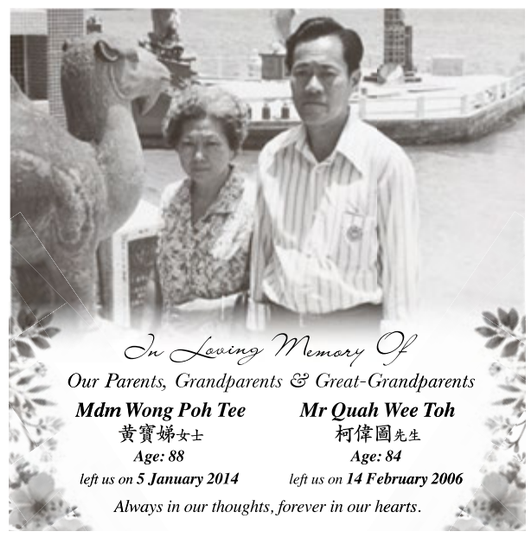
Brother:
Reuben John

Sister-in-law:
Dulcy Balasubramaniam

Sister:
Christina John

Brother-in-law:
Ragunath Guha Ramanathan

Wake is held at Singapore Casket Level 2, Diamond Hall.
Night service on Saturday 5 January 2019 at 8.00pm.
Cortege leaves on Sunday 6 January 2019 at 4.15pm for Mandai Crematorium Hall 2 for cremation at 5.15pm.



In Loving Memory Of
Our Parents, Grandparents & Great-Grandparents

Mdm Wong Poh Tee
黄寶娣女士
Age: 88
left us on ***5 January 2014***

Mr Quah Wee Toh
柯偉圖先生
Age: 84
left us on ***14 February 2006***

Always in our thoughts, forever in our hearts.





Devaraja s/o Karpiah (Naatan Raja)

Age: 42

Passed away peacefully on 3 January 2019, dearly missed and remembered by loved ones.

Father: Karpiah s/o Sannashi
Mother: Sarasu Ahlaikapan
Daughter: Sahyenne Sathana
Sisters & Brother-in-law:
Indrani
Prema & Deepak
Ex-Wife: Evelyn Suen
And all relatives and friends.

He is resting at Block 662B Jurong West Street 64, #05-320, Singapore 642662.
Cortege leaves on Saturday 5 January 2019 at 3.30pm for Mandai Crematorium Hall 1 for cremation at 5.00pm.

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SPORT



WAN LAY CHI
FORMER THROWER OPENS TRACK & FIELD ACADEMY **C7**

EVERY GAME NOW A 'FINAL'



Striker Sergio Aguero is ecstatic after scoring City's opening goal against Liverpool in their Premier League match at the Etihad Stadium on Thursday. PHOTO: AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Edgy Pep lauds 'incredible' players after City inflict Reds' first loss to reignite EPL title race

LONDON • There were moments on Thursday night when Pep Guardiola looked like a man on the edge.

He was pacing back and forth on the touchline, fretting, chewing at his nails, doing little jumps, holding his head in his hands, throwing a scarf down in frustration and finally, in the closing stages, turning to the Manchester City fans and imploring them to turn up the volume.

At times, he even made his opposite number Jurgen Klopp look calm, which takes some doing.

The 2-1 English Premier League win over leaders Liverpool was not quite a must-win game, but that was certainly how it looked and felt.

City, favourites to retain the league title just three weeks ago, played as if their lives depended on it, desperate to quell Liverpool's uprising and to reduce the deficit at the top of the table from seven points to a less daunting four.

Following this mini-revival, Guardiola knows that every game from now on is a "final".

"We knew that if we won, we would be in contention to fight for the Premier League; if we lost, it is over," the Spaniard said.

"I don't remember a league so tough. There are so many huge contenders fighting for the title. It is closer, every game is a final."

In a match that lived up to its billing played in a wonderful atmosphere at the Etihad Stadium, Sergio Aguero put City ahead with a brilliant strike and, after Roberto Firmino had equalised, Leroy Sane inflicted Liverpool's first league defeat of the season with a low shot off the post in the 72nd minute.

"Losing today, it was almost done," Guardiola reiterated.

"Ten points, with goal difference 11 points, so difficult to be honest to turn that situation, but now we are four points behind them.

"We have to fight a lot, but four points is enough to be calm and it is a good moment to congratulate and say 'thank you' to these incredible players.

"Today they show how good they are, they played against an incredible team."

Widely praised for their neat, precise passing, City showed they can also roll up their sleeves on Thursday, working feverishly all over the pitch to pressurise the visitors whenever they were in possession.

"It was important we played with courage," Guardiola said, while also lauding Aguero for having scored in all seven of his home league games against Liverpool.

"We were so aggressive in our pressing, as we knew how complicated it was, and we know how incredibly fast they are when they get in behind – so dangerous.

"We created a lot of chances. Liverpool don't concede goals and we scored two."

City captain and centre-back Vincent Kompany said: "I'm absolutely buzzing with a tremendous performance. We went toe to toe with a very physical, very aggressive team and we matched them, if not more.

"The performance was beyond anything I've ever witnessed.

"It came from the gut, the 12th man is more than just the fans, it's a desire, something from within you can't describe and today it was there and we are a better team when we play with emotion."

He was, however, fortunate to escape with only a yellow card for a studs-up lunge that caught Mohamed Salah. But he said there was no intention to hurt the striker.

"I thought it was a great challenge, was it not? I got the ball, a bit of the man, I didn't try to injure him that's for sure," said the Belgian.

THE TIMES, LONDON, REUTERS, AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

SEE ALSO **C15**

GREAT JOB, GUYS

We went toe to toe with a very physical, very aggressive team and we matched them, if not more. The performance was beyond anything I've ever witnessed.

VINCENT KOMPANY, Manchester City captain, praising his men.

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REDS STILL IN A GOOD POSITION: KLOPP

Manager happy with four-point lead despite loss to City; insists team not mentally weak

LONDON • The four-point lead Liverpool have at the top of the Premier League even after a 2-1 defeat by rivals Manchester City on Thursday was still impressive given their lack of title-winning experience, according to manager Jurgen Klopp.

The match in Manchester was billed by many as an early title decider, where a Liverpool victory would have given them a 10-point lead at the top with 17 games to go, having played City home and away.

However, goals from Sergio Aguero and Leroy Sane, either side of a Roberto Firmino equaliser, ended Liverpool's unbeaten Premier League start and moved City to 50 points and within touching distance of top spot.

"I have so much faith in (my) players you cannot imagine," Klopp said.

"If somebody would have said after both games against Man City that we would have had a four-point lead, I would have paid good money for this, as I thought it was not possible.

"If we would have won the title five times in the last 10 years, then things would be different. We don't have the experience like this. We are still in a very good position so I am happy for this.

"I knew that City could beat us, that is not new. They beat us 5-0 last year. It did not have anything to do with mental strength on one side or the other. It was just unlucky."

Klopp was also unhappy with one decision that did not go his side's way, when City captain Vincent Kompany received only a yellow card for a lunge at Liverpool star Mohamed Salah.

"Situations like this happen. A player goes to ground, and he took the risk. If Mo is on his feet, not jumping, then we all know what happen. Mo can go through," he said.

"Kompany saw him, hit him, and you can make your own opinion."

Despite the loss, former Liverpool captains Graeme Souness and Jamie Carragher believe the Merseyside club still have the advantage in the Premier League title race.

"Liverpool are in great shape," Souness told Sky Sports. "Ask both managers what position you'd rather be in right now.

"You're going to take the four points sitting top of the league, especially with the run-in that Liverpool have."

Having played Arsenal and City back-to-back, Liverpool do not play another top-six side until Feb 24 when they travel to Manchester United.

L10

January matches Liverpool have lost out of 25 (W8 D7 L10) in all competitions under Jurgen Klopp.

Carragher also echoed Souness' sentiments and alluded to Liverpool's recent form against teams outside the top six.

"The form they have shown, certainly against sides outside the top six, they have got a lot of those games coming," the former defender said.

"Four points clear is still a really good position to be in. Liverpool just need to relax, get some wins under their belt, maybe improve that lead if they can over the next month to six weeks."

But now comes some hard work indeed. When Firmino had scored what Klopp hoped would finish as an equaliser, he had clutched a water bottle like it was the league trophy itself, but now the finish line must seem a long way off.

Liverpool next play Wolverhampton Wanderers at Molineux in the third round of the FA Cup on Monday. THE TIMES, LONDON, REUTERS







Above: Manchester City defender John Stones making a last-ditch tackle to keep the ball out of his goal by 1.12cm and away from Liverpool's Mohamed Salah.

Far left: Salah grimacing after being felled by a tackle by City captain Vincent Kompany as a concerned Fernandinho looks on. Kompany received a yellow card for the tackle.

Left: City's Leroy Sane scoring the winner for his side. The German rediscovered his mojo recently to restore coach Pep Guardiola's trust in him. PHOTOS: REUTERS, AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Manchester City v Liverpool: Talking points

SANE TURNS THE CORNER

A season that started with Leroy Sane's future at Manchester City in doubt is no longer a tale of woe for the winger. He underlined his vast potential with the winner that kept the champions' title hopes alive.

He started City's first three league games this season on the bench amid claims Pep Guardiola was concerned by the youngster's lack of focus in training.

But the 22-year-old German gradually regained his manager's trust and scored four times in five games in October. Since then, Sane has been much closer to the buccaneering force who played a major role in their title success last season and City have opened talks over an extension to a contract that expires in 2021.

A VERY CLOSE SHAVE

Despite dominating the early stages, City were just 1.12cm away from suffering a potentially game-changing blow as John Stones atoned for a mistake in dramatic fashion.

The City defender made a panicked clearance and the ball cannoned off goalkeeper Ederson towards his own net. It looked certain to be a farcical own goal but Stones scrambled back to hook clear of an onrushing Mohamed Salah at point-blank range.

Liverpool claimed it had gone in, but goal-line technology showed that a tiny portion of the ball, just 1.12cm according to Premier League statistics, had not crossed the line.

TOO SOON TO CELEBRATE

When a video emerged of Jurgen Klopp ushering in the new year with some dubious dance moves at a party earlier this week, it was jokingly suggested the Liverpool boss was already preparing for his club's title celebrations.

After all, it was 242 days since Liverpool last lost a Premier League game and the Reds arrived at the Etihad boasting a nine-game winning run in the league.

But Liverpool, who were last crowned champions in 1990, are haunted by the ghosts of the past when Steven Gerrard's slip let City steal the title from them and once again they were punished for failing to seize the moment. AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

No talks yet with bosses about me staying on: Solskjaer

LONDON • Ole Gunnar Solskjaer has not yet spoken to the top brass of Manchester United about extending his stay at Old Trafford beyond the end of the season, despite a perfect start to his reign.

The 45-year-old Norwegian has won his first four Premier League matches as United interim manager – a record that only former boss Matt Busby can match.

He made clear after the 2-0 win at Newcastle this week that he would love to stay in the job beyond the summer, when his loan from Norwegian club Molde is set to expire, but said yesterday that he had not spoken to executive vice-chairman Ed Woodward about that.

"It's early days," said former United striker Solskjaer. "When I came in, they were open and honest. They have a process to look for the next manager but, the more you're here, the more you enjoy it.

"It's one game at a time, though, and the day they announce the next manager, if it's me or someone else, then good luck to them."

Solskjaer added that, because of his interim status, he would have only a limited say in United's January transfer activity.

He said he was happy with the squad as it stands and that there was no urgent need to add to it.

"The club's probably had a plan," he said. "I'm sure they've got their targets. I'm here to voice my opinion on that and I'm sure we'll sit down, me and Ed, if we've got anything in the pipeline.

"I'm here to work with the ones I've got. They've all performed and, as long as they perform, they should get a chance. But that's my job, to improve players."

He added that he is just focusing on the FA Cup third-round tie against Reading today.

Midfielder Paul Pogba is likely to miss the clash with a minor injury, while striker Romelu Lukaku, a scoring substitute in United's past two matches, is likely to be given his first start under Solskjaer.

Forward Alexis Sanchez is also set for his first start since Nov 7.

"I'm not sure if Paul's going to be ready," said Solskjaer. "He got a knock against Newcastle.

"Definitely, there will be a few changes and they'll get a chance. Some of them are itching now to play of course.

"It's a chance to get Lukaku and Sanchez a start. That's important for them because they need more game time." AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

MAN UNITED V READING
Singtel TV Ch111, 8.25pm

SportsWorld

Alderweireld's Spurs deal extended to 2020

LONDON • Tottenham have triggered an extension clause in Belgium international Toby Alderweireld's contract which ties him to the Premier League football club until the summer of 2020.

The 29-year-old central defender – capped 88 times and an integral part of Belgium's best performance at the World Cup last year when they finished third – has a £25 million (S$43 million) release clause should a suitor come in for him. AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Naldo leaves Germany for Henry's Monaco

MONACO • Brazilian defender Naldo has joined Thierry Henry's Monaco from Schalke, the French Ligue 1 football club struggling in 19th place announced on Thursday.

The 36-year-old has four caps for Brazil, and heads to the Principality outfit on a contract until June 2020 after 14 seasons in the Bundesliga with Werder Bremen, Wolfsburg and Schalke.
AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Ken Rosewall Arena to get new $48m roof

SYDNEY • Ken Rosewall Arena will acquire a roof as part of a A$50.5 million (S$48.4 million) upgrade to Sydney's Olympic Park Tennis Centre to strengthen the city's bid to host an inaugural ATP Cup team event next year.

The redevelopment includes construction of a canopy roof structure over the two show courts and upgrades to player and media facilities. REUTERS



Villarreal midfielder Santi Cazorla celebrating scoring his second against Real Madrid on Thursday. The former Arsenal player's two goals salvaged a draw for struggling Villarreal. PHOTO: EPA-EFE

Real's woes compounded by Bale's latest injury

VILLARREAL (Spain) • Real Madrid coach Santiago Solari believes losing his star forward Gareth Bale to injury midway through his team's LaLiga match at Villarreal cost his side victory.

The European champions endured a frustrating start to the new year on Thursday as they drew 2-2 at struggling Villarreal and were left seven points behind leaders Barcelona.

"We had the victory in our hands and wanted to kill the game. But they came back and got the equaliser," Solari told Movistar.

"They pressed a lot, were playing at home and needed the points.

"Gareth leaving like that cost us as he had a problem and we missed that counter-attacking edge, and Gareth is a specialist at just that. He got a bang and felt something and was not able to continue."

Former Arsenal midfielder Santi Cazorla gave the home side the lead in the fourth minute of the game which was rescheduled due to Real's participation in last month's Club World Cup. He bent a wonderful shot into the bottom corner of Thibaut Courtois' goal.

But Real struck back three minutes later with a headed goal from Karim Benzema.

Raphael Varane then gave the visitors the lead in the 20th but it was 34-year-old Cazorla, having overcome a terrible run of injuries to resurrect his career in Spain, who had the final say with his second goal.

Real have not won their opening away game of a new year since 2014, and Cazorla's late strike prevented them from going level on points with Sevilla, keeping them in fourth place after 17 games.

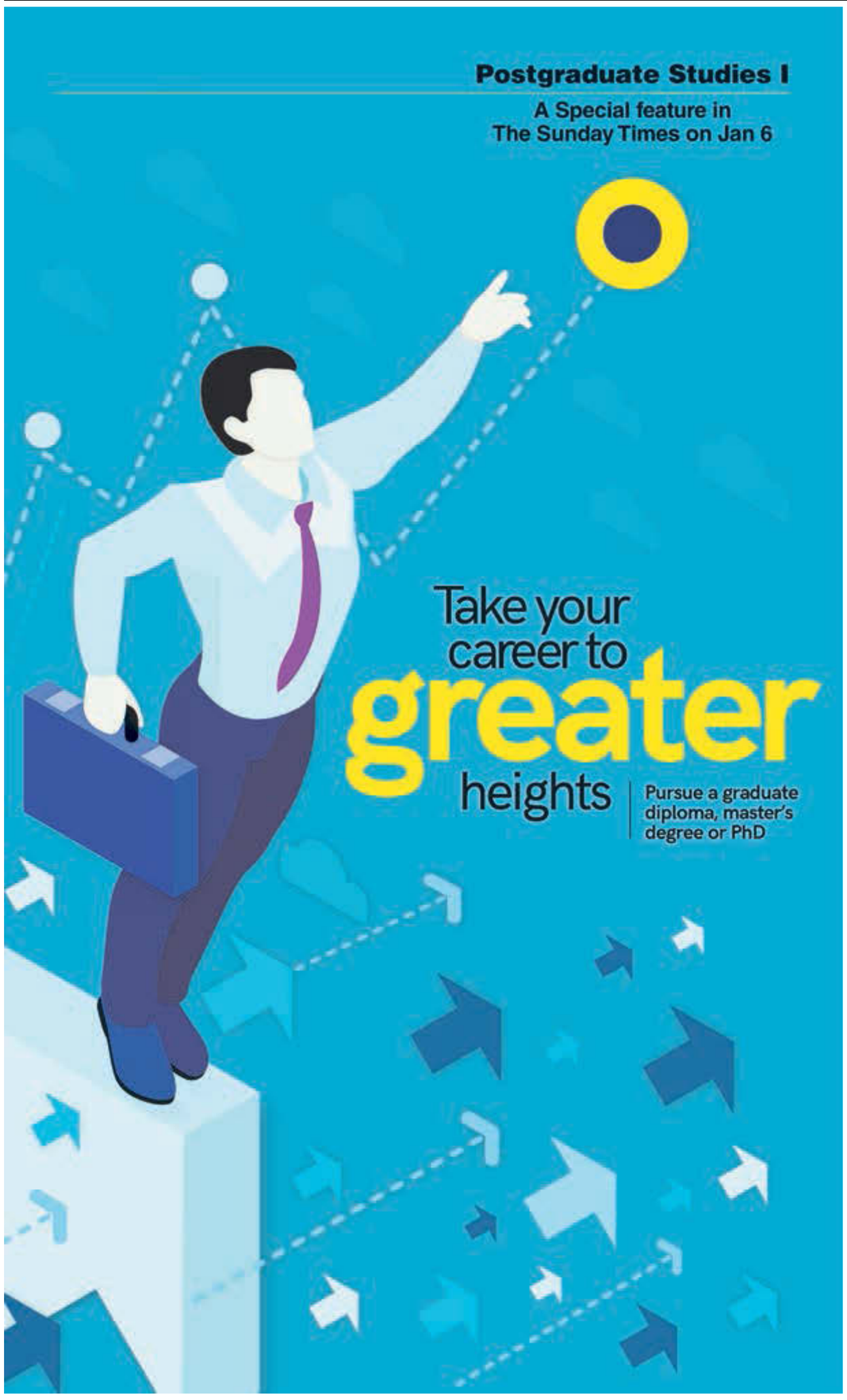
Apart from conceding early, Real were impressive in the first half but lost their grip on proceedings after Bale was substituted with a knock.

Ballon d'Or winner Luka Modric, who helped set up the equaliser, followed Bale off the pitch midway through the second half and Villarreal, spurred on by their supporters, showed more intensity to regain control of the play.

Villarreal, who have reached the last 32 of the Europa League despite a dire domestic season, clawed their way out of the relegation zone to 17th in the standings, level on points with 18th-placed Athletic Bilbao.

"This result will give us strength," said Villarreal coach Luis Garcia, who has taken two points from two games since succeeding the sacked Javi Calleja.

"I imagine that every game from now on will be a battle, a war to survive. But hopefully we'll come through it, and this point gives us a big emotional boost." REUTERS



MAGIC OF CUP FEEDS PEOPLE'S DREAMS: ZOLA

Blues assistant coach urges side to take it seriously; fan banned three years for abuse

LONDON • Twice an FA Cup winner with Chelsea, Gianfranco Zola knows the importance of the competition and what it means to win the oldest tournament in England.

The 52-year-old Italian, now an assistant coach to Blues manager Maurizio Sarri, has urged his team not to take the Cup lightly or to treat it as just one of four trophies they are seeking this season.

"For me, I always rated it as one of the best. It is open to everyone like football should be. It is an open competition and it feeds the dream of many people," he said at a pre-match conference ahead of today's third-round tie at home to Championship side Nottingham Forest.

"The crowd loves it, everybody does. We are trying to establish ourselves in this championship and we want to do well in the FA Cup. It is a pity the game comes when we have played so many games."

Zola also felt that striker Alvaro Morata, who has scored just one goal in his last eight games in all competitions, needed to be patient despite his drought.

"I have been a striker... When you look for goals and they don't come, it happens. Mainly it is confidence," he added.

"Alvaro has to understand to be important for the club. The way we play it helps the front players to score, you have to keep working.

"This is also the big issue we have for the amount of time we have the ball. We don't create enough chances. It is part of the process, we are not the perfect team."

Following the clash today, Chelsea will travel to Wembley to take on Tottenham in the first leg of the League Cup semi-finals on Tuesday and Zola hinted that Sarri will rotate his squad.

"You have to try to save some players," he said. "We have some players who cannot play, like Pedro, Willian and (Olivier) Giroud (due to injuries). It will leave space for others. We will rotate a little."

Off the pitch, a Chelsea supporter has been banned from attending games for three years after being found guilty of homophobic chants during the club's Premier League game against Brighton at the Amex Stadium last month.

George Bradley pleaded guilty at Brighton Magistrates' Court on Thursday to the offence of using threatening, abusive or insulting words or behaviour to cause harassment, alarm or distress. The 20-year-old was also fined £965 (S$1,663).

Meanwhile, Arsenal manager Unai Emery insisted that he will not take his opponents lightly when they travel to League One side Blackpool today.

The Spaniard will be in charge of his first FA Cup tie and he hopes to avoid a repeat of an outcome similar to when his Sevilla side lost to third-tier Racing Santander in the Copa del Rey in 2013.

He said: "I think we can win, we can lose, we can draw but we must be concerned. It is important also to prepare and respect every team." REUTERS

CHELSEA V NOTTINGHAM FOREST
Singtel TV Ch111, 10.55pm

BLACKPOOL V ARSENAL
Ch111, tomorrow, 1.25am

ENGLISH FA CUP

3RD RD (SELECTED)

TODAY
Man United v Reading
Ch111, 8.25pm

Chelsea v Nottingham
Ch111, 10.55pm

Blackpool v Arsenal
Ch111, tomorrow, 1.25am

Gillingham v Cardiff
Ch112, 10.55pm

Newcastle v Blackburn
Ch112, tomorrow, 1.25am

West Ham v Birmingham
Ch113, 8.25pm

Everton v Lincoln
Ch113, 10.55pm

Crystal Palace v Grimsby
Ch113, tomorrow, 1.25am

TOMORROW
Man City v Rotherham
Ch111, 9.55pm

Newport v Leicester
Ch111, Monday, 12.25am

Woking v Watford
Ch112, 9.55pm

Fulham v Oldham
Ch113, 9.55pm

MONDAY
Wolves v Liverpool
Ch111, Tuesday, 3.40am

All on Singtel TV

THE STRAITS TIMES
YOUNG STAR OF THE MONTH
PRESENTED BY 100PLUS



The ACS (Barker Road) C Division squad comprise (front row, from left): Silas Chua, Ryan Chong, Ethan Ong, Ryan Eng and Benjamin Wee, and (back row, from left) Ethan Chua, Ryan Tan and Seth Wong. ST PHOTO: WANG HUI FEN

ACS (Barker Road) table tennis C Div boys' team

PADDLERS WITH PASSION

Boys take initiative to form team 2 weeks before event, and finish with zonal bronze

Sazali Abdul Aziz

Table tennis was not an official co-curricular activity (CCA) at Anglo-Chinese School (Barker Road) when Ryan Chong and his teammates from ACS (Junior) entered the school last year.

But, driven by their passion for the sport, the group of boys decided to form their own team to represent the school.

Putting together a team of seven players – the minimum number needed – just two weeks before the start of the South Zone C Division boys' table tennis championship, they went on to win an unprecedented bronze medal last February.

For their unwavering passion for the sport, the team comprising Ryan Chong, Silas Chua, Ethan Ong, Ryan Eng, Benjamin Wee, Ethan Chua, Ryan Tan and Seth Wong have been awarded The Straits Times' Young Star accolade backed by 100Plus and given to school athletes who shone during the National School Games in 2018.

They are also nominated for the Young Star of the Year gong, and are the only team among five nominees.

Team captain Ryan Chong beamed with pride when told of the accolade.

"It makes me feel very happy, because my friends and I worked very hard to achieve what we did," said the 13-year-old.

Ryan explained that he and several teammates who had played table tennis together for ACS (Junior), like Ethan Ong and Ryan Eng, had discussed the idea of forming a team once they entered ACS (Barker Road).

Said Ethan: "Our seniors in the table tennis team at ACS (Junior) had also wanted to form a team once they got into ACS (Barker Road), but did not manage to.

"So I was quite sad thinking that I would not be able to play any more.

"Initially, we thought there was no hope, but we thought about it and decided we should just try to talk to the principal."

With the help of their parents, the boys began a dialogue with ACS (Barker Road) principal Loo Ming Yaw.

Despite having many challenges to overcome, all parties pulled their weight to make the boys' ambition to represent the school a reality.

LAST-DITCH EFFORT

Initially, we thought there was no hope, but we thought about it and decided we should just try to talk to the principal.

ETHAN ONG, ACS (Barker Road) C Division table tennis player, on all parties pulling their weight despite the challenges to help realise the boys' sporting dreams.

Parents took turns to prepare lunch and ferried the boys to a table tennis club in Aljunied for training after school, where they also paid for private coaching.

The school supported the newly formed team by arranging for transport and deploying teachers to chaperone them at competitions.

The boys themselves had to juggle other CCAs they had signed up for, meaning many late nights completing homework or using the weekends to catch up on their studies.

But all their sacrifices proved worthwhile when they clinched the bronze at the zonal event.

The team welcomed their eighth member, Ethan Chua, soon after and competed at the National School Games, but were knocked out in the preliminary round.

Said principal Loo: "The school is proud of the team and their achievements.

"More than that, we are proud of their commitment to their area of passion and their dedication to improve themselves and achieve their goals.

"The (Young Star) award is a recognition of their attitude as well as the support of those around them – teachers, parents and coaches.

"Commitment is one of the school's values and we are pleased that the students were able to live out that value in the pursuit of their passion."

Said ST deputy sports editor Lim Han Ming: "Passion, initiative and commitment are key tenets in sport and the ACS table tennis team exemplified those values.

"Their ability to surmount obstacles will put them in good stead as they pursue their sporting goals in the future."

msazali@sph.com.sg



Asian Cup 2019

SPEED IS KEY FOR SOCCEROOS

New-look Australia count on pacey front line to bang in the goals for continental title defence



Australia's Tom Rogic has been tipped by national coach Graham Arnold to be one of the stars of the Asian Cup for the defending champions. PHOTO: AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

SYDNEY • Australia are banking on pace and versatility up front to win back-to-back Asian Cups as they embark on a new era without stalwarts Tim Cahill and Mile Jedinak.

The Socceroos are a different beast to Ange Postecoglou's team that beat South Korea in extra time to lift the trophy at home in 2015.

They have a new coach in Graham Arnold and an inexperienced squad, with the majority of the 23 men in the United Arab Emirates never having experienced the cut and thrust of Asian Cup football.

Since taking the reins after a poor showing at their fourth consecutive World Cup in Russia under Bert van Marwijk, Arnold has asserted his authority with the team unbeaten in his first four games.

The 55-year-old has jettisoned several players and changed the style of play. For years, Australia used to have one target man up front, usually Cahill, but the traditional centre forward role has been replaced with an attacking trio.

"The need for speed is up front," Arnold declared, naming a host of players who can "make a difference" in such a role – Matt Leckie, Jamie Maclaren, Andrew Nabbout, Chris Ikonomidis, Awer Mabil, Robbie Kruse and Tom Rogic.

"They're technically very good but quick. People talk about the goalscoring side of it. We've got goalscorers everywhere."

Arnold is keeping Jordan, their first opponents in Group B tomorrow, guessing who will lead the line.

MacLaren and Leckie would seem to be the front runners. He was also banking on Martin Boyle, but the Hibernian winger was ruled out of the tournament after picking up a knee injury in their 5-0 rout of Oman in a warm-up game on Sunday.

It is a blow for Australia with Boyle having already scored two goals in three appearances for a country he had never even visited until Arnold travelled to Edinburgh to convince him to switch allegiances in recent months. He will be replaced by the Cyprus-based striker Apostolos Giannou, 28.

Australia are already without midfielders Daniel Arzani and Aaron Mooy owing to knee injuries, but Arnold can still count on a mix of old and new.

Mark Milligan, Kruse and Leckie have plenty of experience, while there are youthful additions such as Ikonomidis and Mabil, a refugee who came from Sudan in 2006 and made his debut in October.

Arnold also expects Rogic to be among the best players at the Cup as the attacking midfielder continues to recover from a knee injury.

"I expect him to be nearly player of the series," said Arnold. "There's not many talents that have come through Australia with that type of technique and skill as Tommy.

"When you give him freedom and confidence and belief, get him smiling and make him happy, he's going to be great."

Only South Korea, Japan and Saudi Arabia have managed back-to-back triumphs. Australia first need to get through a group that also includes Syria and Palestine.

Former goalkeeper Mark Schwarzer identified South Korea and Japan as the Socceroos' biggest title threats, and said anything less than making the semi-finals would be a failure.

"We've qualified for four consecutive World Cups, and are Asian Cup champions so there's a very high bar in the national team," he said.

"It's about attitude and character and we go into this tournament with that intact.

"We have seven games and I expect (them) to win every game." AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

UAE V BAHRAIN
Singtel TV Ch114 & StarHub Ch208, 11.50pm

AUSTRALIA FACTFILE

FIFA RANKING: 41

BEST PERFORMANCE: Champions (2015)

COACH: Graham Arnold

KEY PLAYER: Tom Rogic (midfielder)

Contenders and teams to watch

MODEST JAPAN AIM FOR FIFTH TITLE

Japan coach Hajime Moriyasu indulged in some early mind games by claiming his side were long shots to win a record-extending fifth Asian Cup title.

"We're the challengers," said the former Japan midfielder, who has yet to lose in five matches since taking over from Akira Nishino after the 2018 World Cup.

"Our job is to try and snatch the title back."

Despite Leicester striker Shinji Okazaki and Borussia Dortmund playmaker Shinji Kagawa being omitted from the squad, former Japan coach Philippe Troussier has tipped the Samurai Blue for glory in the United Arab Emirates.

"Japan have one of the best teams in the competition on paper," said the Frenchman. "Of course, teams like South Korea, Iran and Saudi Arabia have the same ambition, but Japan have the potential to win the title."

Japan open their campaign against Turkmenistan on Wednesday and also face Oman and Uzbekistan in Group F.

Veteran Yuto Nagatomo believes the new-look team, who reached the knockout stages of last year's World Cup after controversially sacking coach Vahid Halilhodzic in the run-up, can spring some surprises.

"We have to believe we can win it," the Galatasaray full-back told local media. AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

JAPAN FACTFILE

FIFA RANKING: 50

BEST PERFORMANCE: Champions (1992, 2000, 2004, 2011)

LAST EDITION (2015): Quarter-finals

COACH: Hajime Moriyasu

KEY PLAYER: Takumi Minamino (forward)



SOUTH KOREA BANK ON SON TO END LONG WAIT

South Korea are hoping forward Son Heung-min's dazzling pace and goals can help them end a 59-year wait to be crowned continental kings.

The 2015 runners-up have put their stamp on the international scene in recent times, stunning holders Germany at last year's World Cup before winning the Asian Games football tournament in September last year.

Son, 26, was at the heart of both successes and his delight was plain to see at the Asian Games where victory earned the team an exemption from South Korea's compulsory, 21-month military service.

He has been in scorching form for Tottenham, scoring seven goals in his last seven Premier League games and he believes a break from international duty in November helped him avoid a mid-season burnout.

Since coach Paolo Bento took charge of the Taeguk Warriors in August, they have been unbeaten in seven matches. Son will, however, miss the first two matches against Philippines (Monday) and Kyrgyzstan (Jan 11) under an agreement between Spurs and the Korea Football Association. He will join the squad in time for their final Group C clash against China on Jan 16.

"The Asian Cup is big for us because we have not won it for 59 years... I am going there to win something," he added. AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE, REUTERS

SOUTH KOREA FACTFILE

FIFA RANKING: 53

BEST PERFORMANCE: Champions (1956, 1960)

LAST EDITION: Runners-up

COACH: Paulo Bento

KEY PLAYER: Son Heung-min (forward)



QUEIROZ EYES FAST START FOR IRAN

Iran coach Carlos Queiroz has demanded a high-intensity start against debutants Yemen in their Asian Cup Group D opener.

World No. 29 Iran, the top-ranked Asian team, are one of the tournament favourites and the Portuguese said they must make their presence felt on Monday.

"I want to develop this kind of instinct in my team, to keep all of our energy so that it explodes in the 90 minutes against Yemen," Queiroz told the AFC website.

"And, when we finish the game, then it's time to think about Vietnam and after that Iraq."

Queiroz urged his team not to underestimate 135th-ranked Yemen.

"The first game is always the most difficult because it's everything for the winner and almost nothing for the loser in a short competition of three games," he said. "There are no small teams.

"I was checking the results of the Iran teams in different competitions, at U-17s, U-20s, and never have Iran beaten Yemen in official competitions.

"There's a reason for that: Yemen might draw or lose, but Yemen are a tough team to beat."

Iran are looking to end a 43-year wait for their fourth title. They crashed out of the last Asian Cup on penalties to Iraq in a thrilling quarter-final. REUTERS

IRAN FACTFILE

FIFA RANKING: 29

BEST PERFORMANCE: Champions (1968, 1972, 1976)

LAST EDITION: Quarter-finals

COACH: Carlos Queiroz

KEY PLAYER: Sardar Azmoun (striker)



ADDITION OF TRIO A BOOST FOR THAILAND

The return of Teerasil Dangda, Theerathon Bunmathan and Chanathip Songkrasin may force Thailand to make a few tactical tweaks, but vice-captain Chalermpong Kerdkaew said their experience will only improve the team's chances at the Asian Cup.

Teerasil, who missed out on Thailand's AFF Suzuki Cup campaign last month when they exited in the semi-finals, was named captain by coach Milovan Rajevac. The 30-year-old striker, who plays for J1 League club Sanfrecce Hiroshima on loan from Muangthong United, is the only surviving member from Thailand's last Asian Cup appearance in 2007.

He has scored 42 goals in 95 appearances, while full-back Theerathon and midfielder Chanathip allow them to be more adventurous going forward.

"It is good to have them back in the squad. We are stronger with them in the team," said Chalermpong.

Thailand face India in their Group A opener tomorrow before meeting Bahrain and host UAE.

Despite their underdogs status, Thailand are targeting a first appearance in the knockout stages since 1972 when they finished third on home soil.

"I agree that all the teams that have qualified for the finals are strong, but we aren't afraid of anyone," Chalermpong added. REUTERS

THAILAND FACTFILE

FIFA RANKING: 118

BEST PERFORMANCE: Third place (1972)

LAST EDITION: Did not qualify

COACH: Milovan Rajevac

KEY PLAYER: Chanathip Songkrasin (midfielder)



PHOTOS: REUTERS, AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE, THE NEW PAPER FILE

TWAY BEATS PAIN TO TAKE EARLY LEAD

Despite sinus infection and earache, golfer shoots a 66 to upstage big names in Hawaii

MAUI • Kevin Tway was suffering from a sinus infection and an aching ear, but that did not stop the American golfer from shooting a bogey-free round of 66 to take a one-stroke lead at the Tournament of Champions in Maui on Thursday.

Defending champion Dustin Johnson, Justin Thomas and Gary Woodland were tied for second place after rounds of six-under 67 on a sunny and windy day at the scenic island course in Hawaii.

Tway, 30, walked gingerly around the Kapalua Plantation and at times looked like he might not complete the round.

But it did not show on his scorecard as he sank seven birdies to take an early lead at the first PGA Tour event of the year.

"I was just trying to drink water, eat some food and stay upright," he told the Golf Channel.

"But the golf was good. I drove it well, kept the ball in play, hit a lot of greens and made some good putts.

"Everything was kind of going the right way."

The Safeway Open champion also said he was eager to get off the course and into bed.

"I'm feeling a little dizzy and tired. Definitely going to get horizontal, probably take some more medicine and sleep a lot, which I'm good at," he said with a smile.

World No. 3 Johnson displayed his mastery of the course he knows well, mixing seven birdies with a bogey to kick off his campaign for his third title at the tournament.

The 34-year-old American has never had an over-par round in nine starts at Kapalua.

The rust from an extended break for world No. 1 Brooks Koepka showed, as the PGA Tour Player of the Year was limited to a round of three-over 76 and tied for 30th.

The 34-man field in Hawaii is restricted to winners on the PGA Tour last year.

Three golfers – Tiger Woods, Phil Mickelson and Justin Rose – qualified but are not playing.

Meanwhile, a raft of changes came into effect on Jan 1 in the biggest rewrite of the regulations in decades and had their first professional test at the tournament.

Perhaps the most noticeable change is that players can now leave the pin in while putting, something that previously was not allowed.

Bryson DeChambeau, who majored in physics at university, turned some heads last year when he said his analysis had determined it was generally advantageous to leave the pin in.

He took ample advantage of the new rule and birdied three of his final five holes to finish at four under and in a six-way tie for sixth.

The world No. 5 has not changed his mind about the new rules, although he said there would be one exception.

"It gets tricky when the flag's waving back and forth and I've got a five-footer and shadows," he told Golf Channel as he prepared for the tournament.

"That's the only time I would pull the flag out.

"Any time I've got a putt over 10 feet, I'll probably be leaving it in, especially if it's uphill."

Thomas, however, said he would not be putting with the flag stick in.

"If I've got an eight-footer to win, I can't take myself seriously if I have the pin in," the 2017 PGA Championship winner told reporters.

REUTERS

DOWN BUT NOT OUT

I was just trying to drink water, eat some food and stay upright. But the golf was good. I drove it well, kept the ball in play, hit a lot of greens and made some good putts. Everything was kind of going the right way.

KEVIN TWAY, American golfer, on his fine round of seven-under 66 despite feeling ill.



Kevin Tway chipping onto the 18th green in the first round of the Tournament of Champions at the Plantation Course at Kapalua Golf Club in Lahaina, Hawaii. He leads the field of 34 event winners from last year. PHOTO: AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

New caddie Taylor to partner Ariya at season-opener



Ariya Jutanugarn (left) split with former caddie Les Luark, who was her bagman since 2015.

MIAMI • World No. 1 Ariya Jutanugarn of Thailand will begin the 2019 LPGA campaign in two weeks with new caddie Daniel Taylor, after a split with former bagman Les Luark.

Ariya's team confirmed to the LPGA, according to a tour website posting, that she has made the change ahead of the season-opening Tournament of Champions on Jan 17-20 at Lake Buena Vista, Florida. Ariya's team-up with Englishman Taylor is on a trial basis.

Luark had caddied off and on for Ariya since she joined the LPGA in 2015, including a record-smashing 2018 campaign in which the 23-year-old Thai star won three times – including last June's US Women's Open – and completed an unprecedented sweep of the tour's major season-ending awards.

Taylor has previously caddied for several LPGA players, including South Koreans Pak Se-ri and Jenny Shin, Germany's Sandra Gal and most recently for his fiancee, Sweden's Pernilla Lindberg.

The couple are set to wed at the end of the month in Queenstown, New Zealand.

Lindberg said that the reason for their split on the golf course was because it was "tough sometimes" for a couple to be a caddie and a player.

She won her first LPGA title at last year's first Major tournament, the ANA Inspiration, and will begin her season with Irishman Roy Clarke as her caddie.

Ariya and her sister Moriya will also feature at the HSBC Women's World Championship at the Sentosa Golf Club in Singapore.

The duo's participation at the Feb 28-March 3 tournament was announced in November, alongside that of American sisters Jessica and Nelly Korda. AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Lee back in training, eyes last shot at Olympics

KUALA LUMPUR • Malaysian badminton star Lee Chong Wei resumed training yesterday, officials said, months after the sport's great had to stop playing to fight nose cancer.

The former world No. 1 was seen to be in "high spirits" with plans to get back to court next week, Badminton Association of Malaysia secretary-general Ng Chin Chai told Agence France-Presse.

"He was in the gym doing some cycling with the gym instructor," he said. "He plans to start on-court training next week."

Lee stopped playing after discovering he had cancer in July, forcing him to pull out of the Asian Games and the world championships.

Diagnosed with early-stage nose cancer, he told The Star newspaper last month he had to go through 33 sessions of proton therapy treatment in Taiwan, calling it "a nightmare".

Despite his ordeal, the three-time Olympic silver medallist said he was not giving up on his dream of playing at the Tokyo 2020 Games – his fifth entry if he were to qualify.

The 36-year-old player has tried unsuccessfully to win Malaysia's first-ever Olympic gold medal at three consecutive Games. His last shot at the Olympic title at the Rio 2016 Games ended in tears when he lost to China's Chen Long.

Nose cancer is perhaps the biggest blow suffered by Lee, who was banned after testing positive for a proscribed anti-inflammatory at the 2014 world championships.

Lee returned to the sport in 2015, after authorities accepted he took the drug inadvertently.

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

SPORTS FIXTURES HIGHLIGHTS

Event	Home	Away	Timing	Venue
Sat, 5 Jan 2019				
A League	Adelaide	Wellington	2.35 pm	LW
A League	Western Sydney	Melbourne Vict	4.50 pm	LW
Spanish League	Valladolid	Vallecano	8.00 pm	LW
English Cup	Shrewsbury	Stoke City	8.30 pm	LW
English Cup	Manchester Utd	Reading	8.30 pm	LW
English Cup	West Ham	Birmingham	8.30 pm	LW
English Cup	Chelsea	Nottingham	11.00 pm	LW
English Cup	Everton	Lincoln City	11.00 pm	LW
English Cup	Gillingham	Cardiff	11.00 pm	LW
Spanish League	Alaves	Valencia	11.15 pm	LW
Sun, 6 Jan 2019				
Asian Cup	UAE	Bahrain	12.00 am	LW
English Cup	Crystal Palace	Grimsby	1.30 am	LW
English Cup	Newcastle	Blackburn	1.30 am	LW
English Cup	Blackpool	Arsenal	1.30 am	LW
Spanish League	Huesca	Real Betis	3.45 am	LW

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LOTTERY

TOTO Thu, 3 Jan 2019 Draw No. 3437/2019

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• 1 Winning Share

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Draw Venue: Singapore Pools (Private) Limited, 210 Middle Road, #01-01, Singapore 188994

No person under the age of 18 years shall be allowed to purchase a ticket or to claim any prize.
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Livewire (Singapore Pools) (21 years and above during 'Live' telecast)
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Blow for Sharapova's Australian Open hopes



Maria Sharapova was forced to retire after a thigh injury in her Shenzhen Open quarter-final against Aryna Sabalenka. PHOTO: AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

SHENZHEN • Former world No. 1 Maria Sharapova's Australian Open preparations suffered a blow after a thigh injury forced her to retire from her Shenzhen Open quarter-final clash against Aryna Sabalenka yesterday.

Sharapova struggled to move on court and conceded the opening set 6-1, with coach Thomas Hogstedt urging the Russian to take her game to the next level or call for a medical time-out.

"If you feel more like you did on the first point, then you just stop. Or you take a medical now," he said. "But the shots are there... You have to get it up to another gear."

After receiving treatment off-court between sets, Sharapova sprinted out of the blocks to record a service hold and then pushed Sabalenka in the next game, creating three break-point opportunities.

Sabalenka, however, turned things around to move 4-2 ahead before her Russian opponent found herself unable to continue and retired from the match.

"I think we both played well – and then she got injured," said the Belarusian afterwards. "Hopefully she will get well soon."

Sharapova, who won the Australian Open in 2008, tasted Tianjin Open success in 2017 after a 15-month doping suspension but has endured a difficult run at the Grand Slams.

World No. 13 Sabalenka will face China's Wang Yafan for a spot in the Shenzhen final, while American Alison Riske faces Russia's Vera Zvonareva in the other semi-final.

The Australian Open begins in Melbourne on Jan 14.

In Perth, Germany will meet Switzerland today in a repeat of last year's Hopman Cup final, after downing Australia 2-1 yesterday.

Angelique Kerber got the German team off to a winning start, beating Ashleigh Barty 6-4, 6-4 before Alexander Zverev matched her by defeating Matthew Ebden 6-4, 6-3 in straight sets. The Australian pair got one back over their counterparts in the mixed doubles with a 4-0, 4-3 (5-1) win. REUTERS

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Houston Rockets guard James Harden (13) shooting the game-winning three-pointer, despite being double-teamed by the Golden State Warriors during overtime at the Oracle Arena on Thursday. The Rockets rallied from a 20-point second-half deficit to win 135-134.
PHOTO: REUTERS

HARDEN'S SHOT SEALS TITANIC TIE

He drains three-pointer with one second left in overtime to give Houston win over Golden State

OAKLAND (California) • James Harden strolled into the Oracle Arena on Thursday night wearing a green rain jacket, as he prepared for the big National Basketball Association (NBA) clash with the Golden State Warriors.

It was as if he knew that he would take the two-time defending champions by storm despite them being on their home court.

The point guard, who finished with his second triple-double of the week and fifth of the season, showed once again he was at the top of his game when he rattled in the winning basket with one second left in overtime to lift the Houston Rockets to a 135-134 win.

The reigning NBA Most Valuable Player also drained the three-pointer despite being double-teamed as the Rockets rallied from a 20-point second-half deficit.

"I had confidence it would go in. Even the ones I miss, they feel good," said Harden, who recorded his fifth straight 40-point performance.

"I take my shots, I drive to the basket. I shoot my step-backs with confidence and live with the results.

"I'm just happy to come away with the win.

"I just had to go out and do my part on the highest level."

He finished with 44 points, 15 assists and 10 rebounds in a titanic battle between the Western Conference powers who met in a seven-game NBA play-off semi-final last season won by Golden State.

Harden also had a triple-double on Monday against Memphis comprising 43 points, 10 rebounds and 13 assists. He has scored at least 30 points in 11 straight contests.

Houston coach Mike D'Antoni was at a loss for words.

"I've run out of things to say about him," he said. "Maybe they'll consider him for the MVP race."

When asked if there is any way opponents can stop Harden, he added: "You don't, you can't... You might as well give up."

Thirty of Harden's points came on 10 three-pointers as the Rockets went 21-for-54 from beyond the arc and outscored Golden State 63-42 on threes.

Clint Capela recorded a 29-point, 21-point double-double for Houston, who beat Golden State for the second time this season.

The Rockets (22-15) have now won their sixth straight and 11th in their past 12.

Stephen Curry led the Warriors (25-14) with 35 points despite just 5-for-15 shooting from three-point range. Golden State were 14 for 37 from long distance as a team.

"He's been playing at a high level the last 11 games, so it is not surprising considering the roll he is on," Curry said of Harden.

Kevin Durant and Klay Thompson finished with 26 points apiece for the Warriors, while Draymond Green had nine points, 11 rebounds and eight assists.

The loss was Golden State's third straight at home.

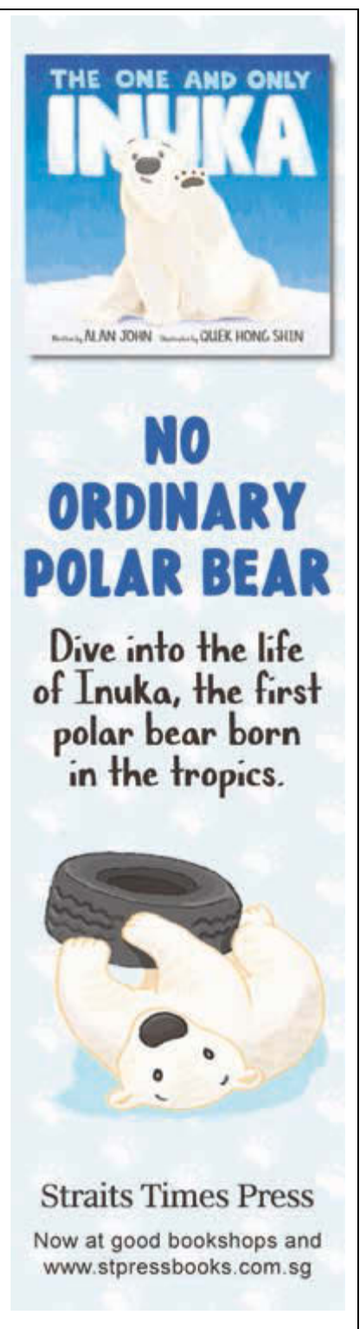
"Harden made the impossible shot at the end," said Warriors coach Steve Kerr.

"Just an incredible performance. He is the master of isolation and the step-back three and drawing fouls."
AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE, REUTERS

44

Number of points James Harden scored against the Warriors. It is his fifth straight 40-point performance. He has scored at least 30 points in 11 straight games.





InGoodConscience

Murray, Schumi fighting their own battles



Rob Hughes

Even in the best of times, observing the decline of our sporting champions can seem like intruding on private grief.

During this first week of 2019, Andy Murray stepped back into he public arena. Between one win and one loss in Brisbane, the former No. 1 tennis player reduced to 240th in the world rankings said he simply doesn't know if he can ever again play at his best.

With tears welling up, his voice breaking, he said: "It kills me that I have not been able to be there competing. It's been really hard, 18 months of a lot of ups and downs... I don't know how much longer it's going to last, but we'll see."

Murray is 31. "It" is the degenerated hip, the result of years of pounding through 851 singles and 138 doubles matches – though in truth, he was first taken to the tennis club by his mother when he was three. By five, his ultra competitive nature was the talk of Scotland.

Mother and son were honoured by Queen Elizabeth in 2017, she with the Order of the British Empire medal, he knighted Sir Andrew Barron Murray.

He had broken the long British drought by winning Wimbledon and the Olympic tennis tournament twice each, and the US Open once. But you could see the strain, sense the pain on his 1.91m frame as he became a global byword for try, try and try again for titles that eluded him.

The Australian Open, for example. He is hoping to qualify in Melbourne next week for the tournament where he reached four finals, and lost every one. The surgeon who operated on him 12 months ago doubts that Murray will ever move as freely or without pain in that joint again.

The knowledge that he had his turn at No. 1, when Novak Djokovic, Rafael Nadal and Roger Federer in their turn suffered physical breakdowns, does not console him. The US$61 million (S$83.1 million) prize money and many more millions from commercial exploitation of fame, do not assuage the inevitability of sports where the body declines early in mid-life.

Yet Murray at least has those memories, and that challenge to live up to. Michael Schumacher, alas, is trapped in a limbo almost beyond imagination.

Unless or until Lewis Hamilton overtakes him, Schuey remains the most successful driver in F1 history – with 91 race victories and seven world titles between 1992 and 2004.

Schumacher turned 50 on Thursday and his family marked the birthday by launching "The Schumacher App" portraying what they call "a virtual museum" of his career.

Sadly, we do not know if Michael has any knowledge or appreciation of his achievements. His brain was severely, it seems irreparably, damaged not through the perils of motor sports but in a fall while skiing in the French Alps late in December 2013.

Schumacher, skiing with his son Mick, crashed and struck his head on a rock. He has since been a prisoner in his own mansion overlooking Lake Geneva in Switzerland.

Very few people outside the family have been allowed to see him since. Ross Brawn, the technical genius who masterminded Schumacher's career at both Benetton and Ferrari, has visited the villa. So has Jean Todt, who oversaw the Ferrari team during Schumacher's time and is now president of F1's governing body, the FIA.

Yet Murray at least has those memories, and that challenge to live up to. Michael Schumacher, alas, is trapped in a limbo almost beyond imagination.

Those are discreet men, trusted by the family to say nothing of his circumstances. We were told that Schumacher regained consciousness five months after being put into an induced coma. Beyond that, his family maintained a vow of silence over his condition.

Media speculation put the bill for his care at €50,000 (S$77,700) per week.

A few days ago, in a rare statement, the family said: "You can be sure that he is in the very best of hands and that we are doing everything humanly possible to help him. Please understand if we are following Michael's wishes and keeping such a sensitive subject as health, as it has always been, in privacy."

Ferrari, while respecting these wishes, opened an exhibition at the factory in Maranello this week to honour his success in the scarlet car.

Meanwhile, the son Mick, now 19, is rising in his father's image. Schumacher Jr, managed by his dad's media adviser Sabine Kehm, won the European Formula 3 Championship last year and rises to F2 for the coming season.

Mick shared the fateful day on the mountain. He shares the addiction to speed. And as much as anyone can, he maintains the quiet dignity outside the family home.

The Schumachers, private yet public, are bound by a life beyond anything that Andy Murray is ever likely to encounter. Perspective.

stsports@sph.com.sg

Sunday's Hong Kong (Sha Tin) form analysis

IVICTORY SET TO BOUNCE BACK AFTER A LAPSE

RACE 1 (1,200M)

8 Ruminare will have to attempt to cross from his wide gate but he's proven effective when getting out and leading in the past. He failed at his only start on this surface, but it was early in his Hong Kong career and there are a number of pointers to suggest he should figure here.
7 Rochford ran a bold race as the favourite a couple of weeks back, just going down to Star Superior. A similar effort will see him go close again.
12 Jimson The Famous was third in that same race. He's on a mark where he's capable of bobbing up at any time.
9 Scarborough Fair deserves respect.

RACE 2 (1,400M)

2 The Full Bloom returns to Class 5, where he is always hard to beat. He's a winner of two of his three starts in the grade and he also returns to the Sha Tin 1,400m, where all three of his career wins have come. Zac Purton jumps aboard and he looks set to win.
5 Ambitious Speedy has run well enough at his last two starts to suggest he's a chance yet again, even from a wide gate.
9 Triumphant Light is out of form but he's capable of getting into the frame with even luck.
1 Savvy Seven can improve down into Class 5, while the drop in trip may prove a positive.

RACE 3 (1,000M)

1 Ivictory has been well below his best in his last three starts, ever since running Hot King Prawn to 3/4 lengths when conceding him plenty of weight over this course and distance in October. He has to concede 20 pounds (9.09kg) to every other runner but, aside from Wishful Thinker, he actually should be conceding more on official handicap ratings. If he can track the speed, he'll be very hard to hold out, even with the weight.
2 Wishful Thinker has an electric turn of foot on his day. The race could collapse, even with just six runners. If that's the case, he'll be the one charging late.
5 Styling City is sure to have plenty of admirers after his win from seemingly nowhere last time out. That said, he's already 12 pounds out of the handicap and it's tough enough already for a three-year-old to figure against this company. He's a chance, but he's unlikely to be as great a chance as the market will have him priced.
3 Jumbo Luck is next best.

RACE 4 (1,200M)

7 Joyful Contender ran a terrific race last time out, just going down by a short head to Golden Effort. Purton jumps aboard from a better draw and he shapes as the one to beat.
2 Generous Heart returns to the dirt with the drop in grade. The son of D'Funnybone has never won on this surface but he gets his chance.
3 Hearts Keeper has had a storied career in Hong Kong, winning eight times from 71 starts – no mean feat in the tough Sha Tin environment. Seven of those wins have come at this course and distance and his last effort suggested that he could easily score one more time before he retires.
10 Nice Kick can finish somewhere around the mark.

RACE 5 (1,650M)

4 Famous Warrior steps out on the dirt for the first time, and perhaps the biggest query is how it has taken him so long to try the surface. Pedigree-wise, the dirt looks a shrewd move – he has strains of the legendary Mr Prospector on both sides – while his racing style suggests that the greater momentum required on the surface will prove ideal. He's a big player.
11 Imperial Concorde rarely runs a bad race at this course and distance. He hasn't raced in nearly three months, having been withdrawn from an intended start in November, but freshness may prove best with him.
3 Top Laurels is racing well and can't be overlooked.
7 Starship, like Famous Warrior, tries dirt for the first time and is another bred for the surface with Mr Prospector appearing on both sides of his pedigree. His last two efforts have been fairly average since winning in early November, but he can bounce back.

RACE 6 (1,400M)

12 Hurricane Hunter finally broke through down in Class 5 last time out, winning with ease despite a troubled passage mid-stretch. He gets up in grade with no weight on his back and it won't take much for him to win again.
6 Alpha Hedge has run well in his last two starts. He may appreciate the step-up to 1,400m and he deserves consideration.
3 The Createth has been racing into form and he looks to be approaching a win. He must be included.
9 Golden Four will be somewhere around the mark yet again.



Ivictory can be very hard to hold out if he can track the speed in Race 3 at Sha Tin tomorrow. PHOTO: HKJC

RACE 7 (1,200M)

1 Super Leader steps out on dirt for the first time. Like Famous Warrior a couple of races earlier, it is amazing in that he hasn't tried the surface yet, given that his pedigree – with both Mr Prospector and Northern Dancer on both sides – says that the dirt should prove a plus. He gets blinkers on for the first time and steps out for Caspar Fownes for just the second time. Really, he just looks a winner.
6 Gift Of Lifeline has trialled well and looks primed for his first start. He's another with Mr Prospector and Northern Dancer on both sides, but he also has strains of Secretariat on his dam's side as well. He will likely appreciate further than 1,200m but he's the main danger to the topweight.
11 Star Superior ran home boldly to score last time out. Back up into Class 4 isn't ideal but he's one who is likely to continue in good form for a couple of starts yet.
12 Travel Successor has no weight and is one to watch.

RACE 8 (1,800M)

3 You Have My Word has proved consistent since scoring a shock win in March. Victor Wong takes his weight down to a reasonable mark and he looks a leading player in this spot.
6 General Dino has now had 21 starts in Hong Kong without a win, but he's run a number of good races over 1,800m at both courses. He has a wide gate, although it's not that bad from this start, given there is about 750m or so before the first bend. If he can get cover, he's a threat.
11 Happy Rocky isn't far from getting to the cellar grade. Still, he's run well enough of late to suggest he's a chance.
12 Le Panache is honest and should be in the mix.

RACE 9 (1,400M)

12 Follow Me could not have been more impressive two starts back under a typically smart Tye Angland ride before the three-year-old just came up short behind Taking Aim last time out with Joao Moreira up. Moreira is aboard again here and he should have no excuses for failure in this spot.
8 Sumstreetsumwhere has finally found form in his last two starts, going some way to living up to his reputation from New Zealand. Purton takes his first ride on the four-year-old and he bears close watching.
6 Penang Hall is likely to be big odds but he is a legitimate value play. He's produced many good efforts at the course and distance and should enjoy every chance just beyond midfield.
14 Cordyceps can't be discounted with no weight on his back.

RACE 10 (1,600M)

This race is sure to be crucial for the Hong Kong Classic Mile, the first leg of the Four-Year-Old Classic Series on Jan 27.
9 Charity Go ran a huge race fresh out on the speed before he was bizarrely taken back to last in his most recent outing, even though that race had no speed (and didn't appear to have any speed pre-race, either). Purton takes over from a good draw and he's the one to beat.
1 Furore will be suited back to set weights in the Classic Mile, but he stuck on well in his first outing and he is only going to take benefit from that. He may need this run to bring him to his peak for the Classic Series.
8 Tigre Du Terre just failed to run down Insayshable fresh, a very good first effort in Hong Kong. He looks to still have upside and he's not without claims.
12 Enrichment has somewhat flown under the radar as a Classic Series hopeful, but his first start was good enough and he should only be improved for that run.

Comments courtesy of The Hong Kong Jockey Club

Friday's South Africa results

RACE 1
1st 1 Emerald Band ($29-$8)
2nd 4 Shinnecock ($6)
3rd 2 Midwinter (No 3rd dividend)
4th 3 Path Of Choice
Forecast $6 **Tierce** $65
Trio $12 **Quartet** $172

RACE 2
1st 4 Cabo Da Cruz ($12-$6)
2nd 1 Gimmetherain ($10)
3rd 2 Engage And Beware ($32)
4th 19 Trojan Winter
Forecast $14
Place Forecast (1-4) $7, (2-4) $34, (1-2) $40
Tierce $223 **Trio** $56
Quartet No winner ($268 carried forward)
Scratching: 17 Salt

RACE 3
1st 2 Bold Assassin ($18-$7)
2nd 3 Destin ($7)
3rd 11 Magic Mountain ($11)
4th 5 Deposition
Forecast $8
Place Forecast (2-3) $5, (2-11) $8, (3-11) $7 **Tierce** $53
Trio $17 **Quartet** $647
Scratchings: 1 Metropolitan, 7 Orange Bitters

RACE 4
1st 3 Indi Anna ($47-$16)
2nd 13 Je Ne Sais Quoi ($6)
3rd 5 Blush Scarlet ($30)
4th 1 Bella Summer
Forecast $36
Place Forecast (3-130 $12, (3-5) $58, (5-13) $23
Tierce $1,818 **Trio** $148
Quartet No winner ($692 carried forward)

RACE 5
1st 2 Charles ($107-$16)
2nd 4 Vardy ($6)
3rd 10 Crome Yellow ($18)
4th 6 Green Archer
Forecast $31
Place Forecast (2-4) $13, (2-10) $38, (4-10) $11
Tierce $1,810 **Trio** $166
Quartet No winner ($2,298 carried forward)

RACE 6
1st 12 Princess Irene ($54-$14)
2nd 11 Foxy Princess ($10)
3rd 7 Expedite ($8)
4th 3 Dynasty's Blossom
Forecast $67
Place Forecast (11-12) $21, (7-12) $16, (7-11) $7
Tierce $1,378
Trio $73
Quartet No winner ($3,458 carried forward to today's South Africa meeting)

SUNDAY'S HONG KONG (SHA TIN) RACE CARD

RACE 1 — **CLASS 5 AWT - 1200m**
TIME : 1:00 — **Stakes: HK$690,000**

No.	Horse Name	Trainer	Jockey	wt(lb)	Bar
1	MONEY MARSHAL	P O'SULLIVAN	C WONG	133	3
2	RAICHU	D E FERRARIS	Z PURTON	132	8
3	MASSIVE MOVE	L HO	M F POON	131	6
4	KEEP GOING	Y S TSUI	M L YEUNG	130	2
5	HAPPY SOUND	C FOWNES	C MURRAY	128	1
6	LUCKY COIN	K L MAN	S CLIPPERTON	126	9
7	ROCHFORD	L HO	J MOREIRA	124	4
8	RUMINARE	R GIBSON	A BADEL	122	11
9	SCARBOROUGH FAIR	R GIBSON	M CHADWICK	121	7
10	SUNNY ORIENT	T P YUNG	G VAN NIEKERK	118	10
11	HAPPY OUT THERE	C W CHANG	W M LAI	116	12
12	JIMSON THE FAMOUS	C H YIP	K TEETAN	116	5

RACE 2 — **CLASS 5 TURF - 1400m**
TIME : 1:30 — **Stakes: HK$690,000**

No.	Horse Name	Trainer	Jockey	wt(lb)	Bar
1	SAVVY SEVEN	J MOORE	M F POON	133	2
2	THE FULL BLOOM	C H YIP	Z PURTON	132	1
3	BEST GIFT	P F YIU	C Y HO	130	6
4	HONG KONG'S FOLKS	C W CHANG	J MOREIRA	128	13
5	AMBITIOUS SPEEDY	Y S TSUI	S DE SOUSA	124	12
6	STARLOT	R GIBSON	M CHADWICK	124	7
7	DRAGON WARRIOR	K H TING	D WHYTE	123	11
8	GREAT SON	L HO	K TEETAN	123	14
9	TRIUMPHANT LIGHT	D E FERRARIS	G VAN NIEKERK	122	5
10	HIDDEN SPIRIT	P O'SULLIVAN	A SANNA	121	8
11	THE HAPPY BUNCH	C S SHUM	N CALLAN	121	9
12	BONITO	L HO	H N WONG	113	4
13	GOBI STORM	T P YUNG	M L YEUNG	113	3
14	COUR VALANT	K L MAN	A BADEL	113	10

RACE 3 — **CLASS G3 TURF - 1000m**
TIME : 2:00 — **Stakes: HK$3,250,000**

No.	Horse Name	Trainer	Jockey	wt(lb)	Bar
1	IVICTORY	J SIZE	J MOREIRA	133	3
2	WISHFUL THINKER	R GIBSON	A BADEL	113	6
3	JUMBO LUCK	K W LUI	H N WONG	113	4
4	JOLLY BANNER	P F YIU	M F POON	113	5
5	STYLING CITY	J MOORE	D WHYTE	113	2
6	FABULOUS ONE	R GIBSON	M CHADWICK	113	1

RACE 4 — **CLASS 4 AWT - 1200m**
TIME : 2:30 — **Stakes: HK$920,000**

No.	Horse Name	Trainer	Jockey	wt(lb)	Bar
1	DR PROACTIVE	K H TING	N CALLAN	133	6
2	GENEROUS HEART	C H YIP	U RISPOLI	132	12
3	HEARTS KEEPER	D E FERRARIS	H N WONG	132	1
4	THIS ONE'S FOR YOU	K W LUI	M L YEUNG	131	4
5	HAVE FUN TOGETHER	F C LOR	M F POON	130	7
6	BELLA BABY	W Y SO	D WHYTE	125	10
7	JOYFUL CONTENDER	R GIBSON	Z PURTON	124	2
8	BRAVE BABY	A S CRUZ	K TEETAN	123	11
9	BORNTOACHIEVE	Y S TSUI	S DE SOUSA	120	5
10	NICE KICK	J SIZE	J MOREIRA	118	8
11	MASSIVE MILLENNIUM	T P YUNG	G VAN NIEKERK	117	9
12	EVER STRONG	K L MAN	C Y HO	115	3

RACE 5 — **CLASS 3 AWT - 1650m**
TIME : 3:00 — **Stakes: HK$1,380,000**

No.	Horse Name	Trainer	Jockey	wt(lb)	Bar
1	TANG FLEMING	C W CHANG	C WONG	131	1
2	GO GO FIRST	P F YIU	M F POON	130	6
3	TOP LAURELS	K L MAN	Z PURTON	129	5
4	FAMOUS WARRIOR	A S CRUZ	A SANNA	128	3
5	NUCLEAR POWER	D J HALL	C Y HO	127	2
6	SMART BOY	T P YUNG	U RISPOLI	126	12
7	STARSHIP	P O'SULLIVAN	M CHADWICK	126	7
8	RIGHT HONOURABLE	R GIBSON	A BADEL	125	4
9	MONGOLIAN LEGEND	Y S TSUI	M L YEUNG	123	8
10	ELECTRIC LIGHTNING	D E FERRARIS	D WHYTE	120	11
11	IMPERIAL CONCORDE	F C LOR	K TEETAN	120	10
12	CHUNG WAH SPIRIT	C H YIP	W M LAI	118	9

RACE 6 — **CLASS 4 TURF - 1400m**
TIME : 3:35 — **Stakes: HK$920,000**

No.	Horse Name	Trainer	Jockey	wt(lb)	Bar
1	FLASH FAMOUS	F C LOR	A BADEL	132	3
2	SOCCER MASTER	D E FERRARIS	A SANNA	131	11
3	THE CREATETH	J MOORE	S DE SOUSA	131	9
4	INTREPIC	D J HALL	N CALLAN	129	2
5	TOUCH OF LUCK	W Y SO	C Y HO	124	10
6	ALPHA HEDGE	K W LUI	D WHYTE	121	7
7	ROYAL RACER	C FOWNES	G VAN NIEKERK	121	6
8	CASHIN MINISTER	J SIZE	J MOREIRA	120	8
9	GOLDEN FOUR	C W CHANG	U RISPOLI	120	14
10	MEGATRON	P F YIU	M F POON	120	12
11	SUPREME WITNESS	A S CRUZ	K TEETAN	120	1
12	HURRICANE HUNTER	C H YIP	Z PURTON	119	4
13	KA YING BRILLIANCE	T P YUNG	M L YEUNG	119	5
14	LEISURED FEET	W Y SO	H N WONG	118	13

RACE 7 — **CLASS 4 AWT - 1200m**
TIME : 4:05 — **Stakes: HK$920,000**

No.	Horse Name	Trainer	Jockey	wt(lb)	Bar
1	SUPER LEADER	C FOWNES	Z PURTON	133	6
2	WINNING SUPREME	Y S TSUI	S DE SOUSA	132	12
3	MICKEY RICH	P F YIU	N CALLAN	130	10
4	BOND ELEGANCE	J SIZE	J MOREIRA	128	9
5	HAPPY HAPPY STAR	K L MAN	D WHYTE	128	7
6	GIFT OF LIFELINE	A T MILLARD	C MURRAY	125	5
7	GOLDEN EFFORT	C S SHUM	A BADEL	125	4
8	DR RACE	D E FERRARIS	U RISPOLI	123	11
9	REAL GIANT	D J HALL	M F POON	119	3
10	DEAL MAKER	T P YUNG	G VAN NIEKERK	116	8
11	STAR SUPERIOR	C W CHANG	K TEETAN	116	2
12	TRAVEL SUCCESSOR	W Y SO	H N WONG	116	1

RACE 8 — **CLASS 4 TURF - 1800m**
TIME : 4:35 — **Stakes: HK$920,000**

No.	Horse Name	Trainer	Jockey	wt(lb)	Bar
1	RED ELYSEES	K L MAN	M L YEUNG	133	4
2	DYNAMIC EAGLE	C S SHUM	Z PURTON	132	14
3	YOU HAVE MY WORD	T P YUNG	C WONG	132	1
4	BRING IT ON	C H YIP	S DE SOUSA	131	12
5	PO CHING TREASURE	C FOWNES	K C LEUNG	128	8
6	GENERAL DINO	D E FERRARIS	N CALLAN	127	13
7	TAI SMART	F C LOR	C Y HO	126	6
8	AMAZING AGILITY	L HO	H N WONG	125	10
9	FINE WITH ME	K H TING	U RISPOLI	122	11
10	GOLDEN KID	K W LUI	M CHADWICK	121	5
11	HAPPY ROCKY	C W CHANG	K TEETAN	117	7
12	LE PANACHE	W Y SO	D WHYTE	117	2
13	JIN JIN KING	D J HALL	A BADEL	116	3
14	INVESTOR BOOM	P F YIU	M F POON	114	9

RACE 9 — **CLASS 3 TURF - 1400m**
TIME : 5:10 — **Stakes: HK$1,380,000**

No.	Horse Name	Trainer	Jockey	wt(lb)	Bar
1	CAMERA FACE	Y S TSUI	H N WONG	133	9
2	STAR MAJESTIC	P O'SULLIVAN	K C LEUNG	132	6
3	SMART LEADER	A S CRUZ	C Y HO	128	14
4	SUN TOUCH	C S SHUM	C WONG	126	5
5	VOYAGE KING	F C LOR	K TEETAN	125	7
6	PENANG HALL	D J HALL	N CALLAN	124	4
7	ROUNDABOUT	A T MILLARD	S CLIPPERTON	124	13
8	SUMSTREETSUMWHERE	L HO	Z PURTON	124	1
9	AMAZING	D E FERRARIS	U RISPOLI	122	10
10	ENDEARING	J MOORE	D WHYTE	121	2
11	FANTASTIC FABIO	C H YIP	W M LAI	121	8
12	FOLLOW ME	J SIZE	J MOREIRA	120	3
13	ULTIMATE GLORY	K L MAN	M F POON	118	11
14	CORDYCEPS	K W LUI	S DE SOUSA	115	12

RACE 10 — **CLASS 2 TURF - 1600m**
TIME : 5:45 — **Stakes: HK$1,950,000**

No.	Horse Name	Trainer	Jockey	wt(lb)	Bar
1	FURORE	F C LOR	K C LEUNG	129	13
2	TIME TO CELEBRATE	J SIZE	J MOREIRA	128	12
3	EASY GO EASY WIN	J MOORE	S DE SOUSA	127	1
4	MONGOLIAN KING	Y S TSUI	U RISPOLI	127	10
5	FAST MOST FURIOUS	D J HALL	M F POON	126	9
6	SICHUAN DAR	A T MILLARD	C WONG	126	7
7	HEAVENLY THOUGHT	F C LOR	G VAN NIEKERK	125	11
8	TIGRE DU TERRE	C FOWNES	A BADEL	124	8
9	CHARITY GO	C S SHUM	Z PURTON	123	3
10	HELENE LEADINGSTAR	A S CRUZ	K TEETAN	123	6
11	PIKACHU	D E FERRARIS	C MURRAY	122	14
12	ENRICHMENT	J SIZE	S CLIPPERTON	120	2
13	KA YING STAR	A S CRUZ	C Y HO	120	5
14	CLASSIC BEAUTY	J MOORE	D WHYTE	118	4

05-01-19 SATURDAY - MACAU RACE CARD

By Singapore Turf Club

MACAU FEED: MACAU (#HK)

Race 1 02:00PM (HK$200,000) **MACA--1200m**

1	0356	Heng Feng Star	58.0	[7]	Leung-1.5	4.8%	Cheong	10.8%
2	3193	Infinite Treasure	57.0	[1]	L Corrales	16.1%	W H Tse	11.3%
3	0057	Not A Single Hel	56.0	[2]	Cheung-3.0	6.1%	Allendorf	8.2%
4	7657	Wealthy Emper	56.0	[8]	F Henriquez	8.7%	S Chow	8.6%
5	38x5	Tron Friend	56.0	[3]	W L Ho	14.5%	K M Chin	7.7%
6	9	Hostwin Panther	55.5	[5]	R Maia	18.4%	Y C Fung	12.3%
7	4243	One From Many	55.0	[6]	O Chavez	10.7%	Seo	8.4%
8	8887	Prosperity Star	54.5	[9]	B Yamzon	5.4%	Leong	8.5%
9	0352	Tyson	52.5	[4]	H Lam	7.2%	P Lee	8.0%

Race 2 02:35PM (HK$210,000) **MACA--1500m**

1	0361	Acing Pro	57.5	[6]	Woodworth	8.6%	M C Tam	8.5%
2	1x43	Pearl Lucky	57.5	[8]	O Chavez	10.7%	Leong	8.5%
3	4865	Autumn Cloud	56.0	[2]	R Maia	18.4%	Cheong	10.8%
4	5514	Golden Wealth	55.5	[1]	W L Ho	14.5%	K.S.Ho	
5	7115	Thunder Bear	55.5	[7]	B Yamzon	5.4%	Leong	8.5%
6	6538	Delighted Soluti	55.0	[3]	S Nakano	3.5%	M C Tam	8.5%
7	6536	Bring Me Glory	54.5	[4]	Leung-1.5	4.8%	Seo	8.4%
8	3847	Destney	54.0	[5]	W Smith	8.7%	Leyshan	8.3%

Race 3 03:10PM (HK$600,000) **MACA--1800m**

1	x919	Krystrump	59.0	[8]	W Smith	8.7%	Leyshan	8.3%
2	1x27	Pearl Green	56.0	[6]	R Maia	18.4%	Leong	8.5%
3	1548	Lucky Winston	55.5	[10]	M Wepner	8.9%	Seo	8.4%
4	3x36	Wichita Linesm	54.5	[12]	H Lam	7.2%	Cheong	10.8%
5	0080	Californiatreasu	52.5	[1]	K W Leung	4.8%	Leong	8.5%
6	4987	Golden Double	52.5	[13]	S Nakano	3.5%	Y C Fung	12.3%
7	3770	River Control	52.5	[11]	F Henriquez	8.7%	Cheong	10.8%
8	2421	Rose Gold Alloy	52.5	[7]	O Chavez	10.7%	Seo	8.4%
9	4188	Royal Garden	52.5	[4]	W L Ho	14.5%	K M Chin	7.7%
10	8594	Sacred Man	52.5	[2]	Woodworth	8.6%	J Lau	11.1%
11	3113	Big Alloy	52.5	[5]	L Corrales	16.1%	M C Tam	8.5%
12	4155	River Treasure	52.5	[3]	K K Lai	5.2%	Cheong	10.8%
13	8272	Off The Bench	52.5	[9]	C L Cheung	6.1%	K.S.Ho	

Race 4 03:45PM (HK$295,000) **MACA--1500m**

1	19x8	Chappo	57.5	[2]	O Chavez	10.7%	Seo	8.4%
2	2105	The Moon's Bac	57.5	[9]	W L Ho	14.5%	W H Tse	11.3%
3	1614	Fifty Flags	57.0	[4]	Leung-1.5	4.8%	Wong	10.9%
4	9694	Hopefully Tomor	57.0	[8]	R Maia	18.4%	Y C Fung	12.3%
5	8800	Oh So Easy	56.5	[5]	B Yamzon	5.4%	Wong	10.9%
6	0651	Ready Fire	56.0	[11]	S Nakano	3.5%	Leong	8.5%
7	0x05	Great Wall	56.0	[12]	K K Lai	5.2%	K M Chin	7.7%
8	70x7	Golden Fans	55.5	[3]	W Smith	8.7%	K.S.Ho	
9	4053	One Belt One R	55.0	[10]	L Corrales	16.1%	Cheong	10.8%
10	7973	Greatest Prodig	54.5	[7]	Pescuis-2.5	4.0%	K M Chin	7.7%
11	3396	Roaring Star	54.5	[1]	F Henriquez	8.7%	K M Chin	7.7%
12	5806	One More Agai	52.5	[6]	Choi-1.5	6.4%	S Chow	8.6%
13	8897	Wonder Holy	52.5	[13]	H Lam	7.2%	Chong	8.6%

Race 5 04:20PM (HK$200,000) **MACA--1200m**

1	9206	Winner Fortune	57.5	[2]	Cheung-3.0	6.1%	K M Chin	7.7%
2	4976	Cheerful Fish	56.0	[6]	W Smith	8.7%	K.S.Ho	
3	6644	The Pleasant Pri	56.0	[1]	W L Ho	14.5%	P Lee	8.0%
4	0x7	Windward	56.0	[5]	S Nakano	3.5%	Y C Fung	12.3%
5	0853	Algonquin Park	54.5	[3]	B Yamzon	5.4%	Leong	8.5%
6	0606	Game Of Drea	54.5	[4]	Choi-1.5	6.4%	Seo	8.4%
7	0645	House Of Power	54.5	[7]	F Henriquez	8.7%	S Chow	8.6%
8	7044	Moon Walker	54.0	[8]	R Maia	18.4%	Seo	8.4%

Race 6 04:55PM (HK$240,000) **MACA--1200m**

1	4446	Garlic And Spic	57.5	[9]	R Maia	18.4%	Cheong	10.8%
2	3435	Jvala	57.5	[7]	F Henriquez	8.7%	K.S.Ho	
3	9x78	Lucky Gold	57.0	[8]	Woodworth	8.6%	J Lau	11.1%
4	8179	Chapman Way	56.5	[2]	Leung-1.5	4.8%	Y C Fung	12.3%
5	3471	Collateral Missi	56.5	[5]	W Smith	8.7%	K.S.Ho	
6	40x7	Diva Achiever	56.0	[10]	Cheung-3.0	6.1%	K M Chin	7.7%
7	5438	Mongolian Warr	56.0	[6]	W L Ho	14.5%	Leong	8.5%
8	5304	Gorgeous Choi	56.0	[1]	L Corrales	16.1%	P Lee	8.0%
9	0890	Wealthy East	55.5	[4]	B Yamzon	5.4%	S Chow	8.6%
10	6332	Beautiful Creati	54.0	[3]	M Wepner	8.9%	Chong	8.6%

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Flak Jacket (black cap) is probably the best of trainer Shane Baertschiger's three runners in tomorrow's $85,000 Kranji Stakes B race over 1,100m. PHOTO: STC

SHANE STRETCHED A LITTLE THIS SEASON

2018 runner-up enters new Singapore racing calendar with a more pragmatic approach

The recently concluded 2018 Singapore racing season must surely have left trainer Shane Baertschiger rueing the one that got away — the coveted champion trainer's title.

It was certainly a case of so near yet so far when the one-time leader found fellow Australian Lee Freedman in his element, driving up in the last few months to clinch the top accolade in his first season. The Australian Hall of Famer with five Melbourne Cup victories saddled 67 winners, leaving Baerschiger in second spot with 59 winners.

But the lanky Baertschiger, affectionately known as Stretch at Kranji, could not have been happier with his top performance. He also savoured a good haul in the feature races.

All his five wins were in Group 3 events, namely the Singapore Three-Year-Old Sprint over 1,200m with Be Bee, the JBBA Rocket Man Sprint over 1,200m with Aramco, the Jumbo Jet Trophy over 1,400m with Preditor, the Garden City Trophy over 1,200m with Aramco and the Saas Fee Stakes over 1,200m with his rising star Bold Thruster.

With the 2019 season just under way, Baertschiger is taking a pragmatic approach and he has his reasons. He realises that he might struggle to keep up with the same tempo into the new season.

Firing winners on a regular basis last year, Baertschiger was a close contender for top honours throughout the year until Freedman drew clear late with his strong team. He said he gave the championship his all, but somehow knew his task would be made harder with the stable's dwindling numbers around October-November.

"It was a very good season, but I knew it'd be tough to win the title. I was left with only half of my stable in the end, it's been a long year," said Baertschiger, who took over from his father Don in 2012 and enjoyed his biggest haul in 2017 with 61 winners to finish third behind Mark Walker (87) and Ricardo Le Grange (65).

"That's why we are having a quiet start to the season. I had only two runners on New Year's Day. It's a bit better this Sunday with seven runners. We'll take it week by week, no rush, we'll be right."

Three of his runners are engaged in the same event – the $85,000 Kranji Stakes B race over the Polytrack 1,100m in Race 8 tomorrow. They are Dinghu Mountain, Flak Jacket and Guilty Pleasures, who did not figure among his most prolific runners last year, even if they all won at least one race, but Baertschiger is still counting on a good performance.

"They're not top chances, but I think they'll run well," he said. "It's hard to split them, but if I really had to, I would say Flak Jacket might have a slight edge.

"He may be eight now, but he's run well at his last three starts. He won in Class 3 and ran well when up in class. Vlad Duric will ride him.

"Dinghu Mountain is first-up from a break. He has a good first-up record, but this may be too short for him.

"Guilty Pleasures ran third at his last start on Polytrack. He's maintained his form."

Baertschiger has booked Barend Vorster and Matthew Kellady on Dinghu Mountain and Guilty Pleasures respectively.

"They're all fit and well and have all drawn well (3, 5 and 6). May the best one of them win," he said.



Pennywise showed fighting spirit to get up on the inside to beat Autumn Assault in June last year. ST FILE PHOTO

Polytrack lover Pennywise needs to adapt to turf

Noted, Pennywise is a proven Polytrack lover, with all his four successes on the alternate track at Kranji.

But, with the Singapore Three-Year-Old Challenge in mind, trainer Ricardo Le Grange knows he has to get his charge to adapt to the turf as soon as possible to have better chance in the series.

The South African would have wished his former top juvenile could have his first-up run on turf, but as there was not much to pick from at this point, he would just have to wait for another day.

Pennywise is now the top-weight in tomorrow's $70,000 Class 3 Div 1 race over the Polytrack 1,200m. In sizzling form, he should have plenty of admirers and should start as the favourite.

Pennywise would have gone five-up on the Polytrack last time out on Nov 30, but had to settle for third behind Revolution and Longhu. He was beaten by only a head and a short head, so it was a top effort all the same.

He has raced on turf only twice and they both ended in defeat but certainly not in disgraceful manner. He finished not far behind the winners.

Thus, with the three-leg Singapore Three-Year-Old Challenge on turf, Le Grange knew it would be wise to get his protege out of the Polytrack comfort zone sooner rather than later.

But, first, he had to keep his charge on his toes and tomorrow's $70,000 Class 3 Division 1 race on the Polytrack was an ideal race to beat those holiday blues.

"Pennywise is in good order after the break. I'm very happy with his trial," said Le Grange, referring to his chestnut Argentinian-bred's fluent victory over tomorrow's likely Race 8 favourite Augustano.

"He had a nice gallop on Wednesday. All's going well, and I expect him to run well on Sunday. I would have given him a run on grass, just so he gets used to it from a 3YO series perspective. But that Polytrack race to kick things off is not a bad thing."

The Singapore Three-Year-Old Challenge gets under way with the Group 3 Singapore Three-Year-Old Sprint over 1,200m on April 5, followed by the Group 2 Singapore Three-Year-Old Classic over 1,400m on May 3 and the grand final, the Group 1 Singapore Guineas over 1,600m on May 25.

Le Grange said the Bernard Kantor-owned galloper's defeats on turf were not entirely conclusive results that he resented the surface.

"He had two runs on turf that were questionable, once in the juvenile race (Aushorse Golden Horseshoe) when he slipped out of the gates with Nooresh (Juglall) and the other one when he got a shifting track and was ridden by Glen Boss," he said.

"He had excuses and we'll have a better idea how he goes when he runs over turf again."

Juglall, who has steered Pennywise to three of his wins, was also in a bullish mood ahead of the gelding's first 2019 assignment.

"Penny has improved with each run. He has four wins on Polytrack and he should go well again," said the Mauritian jockey, who opened his 2019 account with The Big Easy on New Year's Day. "He was unlucky at his last start and, with some luck, he can give us his best on Sunday."

05-01-19 SATURDAY - EUROPE RACE CARD

By Singapore Turf Club

EUROPE FEED: DEAUVILLE (#OTH1)

Race 1 06:45PM (€18,000) **DEAAW--1500m**

1	4017	Wow	61.0	[12]	T Trullier	9.1%	Suborics	11.1%
2	0037	Saint Pois	59.0	[6]	F Panicucci	7.6%	Sauvage	7.3%
3	1224	Beama	58.0	[11]	B Hubert	5.9%	P Monfort	7.4%
4	573x	Inglorious	57.5	[2]	P Bazire	7.7%	E Lyon	12.5%
5	580x	Constantino	57.5	[3]	J Smith	9.4%	Loughna Rose	6.8% 7.1%
6	478x	Tallinski	57.5	[8]	G Snijders			
7	2605	Acrux	57.5	[4]	G Braem	3.3%	Rovisse	2.5%
8	99x7	Desert Heights	56.0	[13]	J Monteiro	5.2%	V Deiss	5.0%
9	0459	Magicienmake	56.0	[9]	E Etienne	6.7%	Nicolay	7.0%
10	0x9	Samagace Du	56.0	[14]	Guillochon	5.9%	Gouvaze	7.6%
11	8852	Vitor	56.0	[5]	E Corallo	13.7%	O M De	14.3%
12	0000	Colibri Cael	56.0	[10]	Q Perrette	5.7%	Leblanc	1.8%
13	x057	Pont Neuilly	56.0	[1]	M Nobili	7.6%	Nicolay	7.0%
14	0009	Bromley Cross	56.0	[7]	D G Sacco	0.0%	M E Varin	0.0%

Race 2 07:15PM (€28,000) **DEAAW--1900m**

1	x10x	Glenorchy	59.0	[2]	Monteir-2.5	5.2%	Brandt	12.6%
2	1	Goya Senora	59.0	[9]	J Cabre	8.6%	Barberot	9.9%
3	1	Kanderas	59.0	[4]	M Guyon	14.1%	H Pantall	10.9%
4	123	Rockemperor	57.0	[6]	Mendizabal	13.5%	S Brogi	14.1%
5	15	Skazino	57.0	[7]	A Crastus	7.8%	C Rossi	12.8%
6	4615	Similaire	57.0	[8]	C Demuro	11.2%	Bietolini	10.4%
7	1122	Marrakech Expr	57.0	[1]	Michel-1.5	8.7%	L Loisel	0.0%
8	97x7	Marboot	55.5	[5]	Perrette-2.5	5.7%	S Cerulis	7.6%
9	0	Lady Te	54.0	[3]	B Flandrin	9.1%	Carvalho	11.8%

Race 3 07:45PM (€16,000) **DEAAW--1900m**

1	345x	Selectif	60.0	[10]	E Hardouin	7.3%	C Lotoux	11.0%
2	1020	Olirodigan	59.5	[6]	Santiag-1.5	6.6%	Doleuze	5.9%
3	6x28	Ducale Di Mare	59.5	[5]	Michel-1.5	8.7%	Sheridan	8.1%
4	400x	Sea And Stars	59.5	[3]	C Demuro	11.2%	Doleuze	7.0%
5	0653	True Reflection	59.5	[7]	S Laurent	4.5%	L Cendra	7.5%
6	6460	Copacetic	59.5	[2]	Cheminaud	13.8%	Allioncle	2.4%
7	0750	Zlatan Dream	59.0	[12]	F Panicucci	7.6%	Poele	7.4%
8	3040	Goji Berry	59.0	[15]	T Piccone	7.7%	A Giorgi	10.7%
9	0006	Lyavenita	59.0	[11]	G Benoist	10.5%	J Toux	5.6%
10	020x	Kings Lyn	58.5	[4]	Massin-1.5	8.3%	Racing	0.0%
11	060x	Soryu	58.5	[14]	A Weis	7.5%	M S Weis	2.9%
12	750x	Manila Palm	58.5	[1]	J Smith	9.4%	Leblanc	1.8%
13	0x00	Acmayag	58.5	[16]	A Coutier	6.5%	Quere	1.3%
14	3253	Semeur D'espoir	57.5	[13]	M Guyon	14.1%	A Bonin	7.2%
15	9000	Montaigne	57.5	[9]	Trullier-1.5	9.1%	F Belvisi	6.5%
16	9x00	Heaven's Door	57.5	[8]	E Etienne	6.7%	Siavy-Juli	2.7%

Race 4 08:15PM (€21,000) **DEAAW--1500m**

1	2431	Monteverdi	61.0	[7]	C Demuro	11.2%	Botti	14.8%
2	0832	Naab	61.0	[1]	Pemp-1.5	7.5%	M C Fey	9.4%
3	8370	Soho Universe	60.0	[5]	S Maillot	5.9%	Mikhalide	15.4%
4	7305	Dark American	60.0	[6]	T Piccone	7.7%	Menges	16.7%
5	8613	Passion Nonant	58.5	[9]	G Benoist	10.5%	J Gauvin	11.2%
6	6x55	Mascalino	58.0	[2]	Lecoeuvre	8.0%	H Blume	11.8%
7	20x0	Victorious Cha	57.0	[4]	Moutard-1.5	8.9%	D Smaga	12.4%
8	9570	April Angel	56.5	[8]	E Etienne	6.7%	P Capelle	0.0%
9	178x	Liberty Lass	56.5	[3]	M Guyon	14.1%	Brandt	12.6%
10	437x	Nuee Ardente	55.5	[10]	E Hardouin	7.3%	V L (Jnr)	7.0%

Race 5 08:45PM (€25,000) **DEAAW--1500m**

1	7	Mirage Vert	58.0	[5]	G Benoist	10.5%	S Wattel	10.9%
2	948x	Alpatkinoss	58.0	[9]	Nicolea-3.5	6.1%	B Legros	6.3%
3	0	Paradoxal	58.0	[7]	Cheminaud	13.8%	H Pantall	10.9%
4	6	Carolingien	58.0	[4]	M Guyon	14.1%	Vermeule	11.5%
5	5x7x	Galoubet	58.0	[1]	T Piccone	7.7%	S Wattel	10.9%
6	90	Gunfire Esqua	58.0	[6]	E Hardouin	7.3%	Carayon	6.0%
7	4	Sir Maxalot	58.0	[3]	Pacaut-1.5	9.4%	Graffard	15.2%
8	4322	Admiral Rous	58.0	[2]	C Demuro	11.2%	O'Neill	9.2%
9	322	Camino Real	58.0	[10]	A Gavilan	12.4%	Guillemin	21.0%
10	7	The Chosen On	58.0	[8]	P Bazire	7.7%	Botti	14.8%

Race 6 09:17PM (€24,000) **DEAAW--1900m**

1	671x	Sebecourt	59.0	[2]	C Demuro	11.2%	S Cerulis	7.6%
2	1111	Green View	58.5	[7]	M Guyon	14.1%	Vermeule	11.5%
3	6371	Rosissim	58.0	[4]	Mendizabal	13.5%	S Brogi	14.1%
4	4122	Real Master	57.5	[15]	A Crastus	7.8%	C Rossi	12.8%
5	4692	Kestrelle	57.5	[14]	M Remy-2.5	11.9%	S Wattel	10.9%
6	8364	Gilou Cat	57.5	[9]	Monteir-1.5	5.2%	F Dehez	0.0%
7	7549	Prince Kerali	57.0	[3]	Lecoeuvre	8.0%	Bollack-B	6.3%
8	6204	Cala Jondal	56.0	[8]	G Benoist	10.5%	Barberot	9.9%
9	9671	Valento	56.0	[13]	Pacaut-1.5	9.4%	Waele	7.1%
10	336	Lottaria	56.0	[16]	Michel-1.5	8.7%	Suborics	11.1%
11	738x	Gavenia	56.0	[5]	Massin-1.5	8.3%	S Wattel	10.9%
12	x559	Mister Mario	55.0	[6]	P Bazire	7.7%	E Lyon	12.5%
13	500	Viserion	55.0	[1]	Cheminaud	13.8%	Bietolini	10.4%
14	4450	Salut Patrice	54.5	[10]	E Hardouin	7.3%	S Jesus	4.4%
15	940	Salty Kiss	54.0	[11]	Santiag-1.5	6.6%	M Hofer	10.5%
16	8049	La Bourdonais	54.0	[12]	A Coutier	6.5%	A Bonin	7.2%

Race 7 09:52PM (€25,000) **DEAAW--1500m**

1	9	Echalou	58.0	[9]	M Nobili	7.6%	R Collet	7.4%
2	2	La Bloutiere	58.0	[1]	C Demuro	11.2%	J Rouget	24.2%
3	2236	Come Back	58.0	[2]	T Piccone	7.7%	Brasme	8.2%
4	664x	Immokalee	58.0	[10]	Santiag-1.5	6.6%	R Marcel	7.5%
5	5x99	Bright Crescent	58.0	[8]	F Panicucci	7.6%	M C Laur	2.0%
6	4	Schhili	58.0	[7]	M Guyon	14.1%	H Pantall	10.9%
7	9x	Sunbird	58.0	[3]	J Cabre	8.6%	Barberot	9.9%
8	006x	Tosen Ciara	58.0	[4]	Massin-1.5	8.3%	Kobayas	6.5%
9	073	Arbequina	58.0	[6]	G Benoist	10.5%	Vollmer	7.6%
10	4x0x	Icebee	58.0	[5]	D Liska	7.7%	V L (Jnr)	7.0%

Race 8 10:32PM (€20,000) **DEAAW--1900m**

1	2221	Zoelola	60.0	[5]	Massin-1.5	8.3%	Beaunez	7.9%
2	8009	Panameras	60.0	[1]	Hautboi-2.5	0.0%	Castanhe	5.5%
3	4350	Magic Mystery	60.0	[12]	G Benoist	10.5%	J Gauvin	11.2%
4	2000	Wallis	59.0	[11]	A Crastus	7.8%	H Ghabri	12.5%
5	6081	Djoko	58.0	[10]	Trullier-1.5	9.1%	H Ghabri	12.5%
6	1438	Eau Du Large	58.0	[16]	Pacaut-1.5	9.4%	Barbe	8.1%
7	0000	Blue Linn	58.0	[9]	Guitrau-1.5	5.0%	J Toux	5.6%
8	2496	Zephir	57.5	[2]	M Guyon	14.1%	Weber	3.9%
9	8145	Avec Laura	57.0	[3]	Lecoeuvre	8.0%	Bollack-B	6.3%
10	20x7	Roy Burg	57.0	[8]	Mendizabal	13.5%	Leenders	8.4%
11	x019	Ken Tah Ten	56.5	[6]	T Piccone	7.7%	Waele	7.1%
12	0090	Grey Magic Nig	56.0	[13]	A Moreau	8.4%	Rovisse	2.5%
13	6218	Black Bird Runs	55.5	[14]	Cheminaud	13.8%	Vollmer	7.6%
14	0840	Dalstar	55.0	[15]	A Coutier	6.5%	Poele	7.4%
15	9389	Jeitoso Bayer	55.0	[7]	C Demuro	11.2%	D Smaga	12.4%
16	3290	Maldon	54.5	[4]	Guillochon	5.9%	Quinton	11.3%

While every precaution is taken to ensure accuracy, the publisher accepts no liability for any error which may arise.

Visit **www.turfclub.com.sg** for more race information and results

PLAY responsibly Do not bet illegally. Always play with care.

05-01-19 SATURDAY - AUSTRALIA RACE CARD

By Singapore Turf Club

AUSTRALIA FEED: ASCOT/ IPSWICH/ GAWLER (#OTH2)

Race 1 12:08PM (A$70,000) **ASCT--1000m**

1		Busy One	57.0	[8]	Johnston-P	10.0%	D Morton	15.0%
2		Crystal Springs	55.0	[6]	P Knuckey	9.9%	M Hayley	10.1%
3		Drinkwhatyoulik	55.0	[1]	M Clark-3.0	9.2%	B Pope	10.1%
4	22	Mia Dolce	55.0	[3]	C Parnham	11.3%	Pangallo	7.4%
5	2x	Miss West Coast	55.0	[2]	J Noske	9.8%	Andrews	11.5%
6		Picture Show	55.0	[4]	T Turner	10.4%	M Hayley	10.1%
7		Powderbelle	55.0	[5]	D Staeck	11.5%	Mcdonag	7.1%
8		Wingsonmyfeet	55.0	[7]	S Parnham	7.3%	Parnham	9.3%

Race 2 12:28PM (A$21,000) **IPSW--1200m**

1	22	Bold Zip	59.0	[8]	D Griffin	13.3%	G Taylor	14.0%
2	42	Bozeman	59.0	[14]	--		Parramor	8.6%
3	35	Cash On Fire	58.5	[13]	L Dittman	14.7%	R	8.9%
4		King Alfonso	58.5	[9]	A Allen	10.2%	Butterwo	10.2%
5		Minor Luck	58.5	[3]	S Lacy	11.2%	Hocking	5.3%
6	2	Wealth'n'power	58.5	[5]	K Yoshida	10.5%	Frappell	6.1%
7	8	Danetist	58.0	[4]	L Tilley	13.7%	Heathcot	12.8%
8	7x3	Daunting Warrio	58.0	[7]	N Day	12.0%	D Duryea	10.8%
9	953x	Enterprise Princ	58.0	[1]	A Fancourt	11.4%	M Lakey	11.7%
10	54x	Jack Derippa	58.0	[2]	M Hellyer	6.8%	Edmonds	18.0%
11	4	Noble Artist	58.0	[6]	N Thomas	5.1%	Thomas	6.8%
12	6x46	Pinch Vista	58.0	[10]	--		Heathcot	12.8%
13	8x4	Dream Piece	57.5	[12]	J Hodge-2.0	11.0%	Morrisey	9.4%
14	6x3	Lake Hillier	57.5	[11]	Hammersle	12.2%	B Ahrens	8.7%

Race 3 12:46PM (A$70,000) **ASCT--1600m**

1	2x11	Angelic Ruler	59.5	[3]	T Stone-1.5	12.2%	Pearce	16.2%
2	27x5	Assetro	56.0	[4]	W Pike	18.1%	A Durrant	18.3%
3	4112	Archant	55.0	[8]	D Lane	13.3%	S Miller	11.1%
4	7x41	Action Figure	54.0	[6]	C Parnham	11.3%	Andrews	11.5%
5	3158	Flying Target	54.0	[7]	Warwick	14.8%	Stelmach	9.6%
6	4365	Global Reset	54.0	[5]	P Carbery	9.7%	N Parker	5.5%
7	6	Goku	54.0	[2]	J Azzopardi	8.6%	R Elliott	6.0%
8	1361	Sliced Bread	54.0	[1]	J Brown	10.7%	Luciani	10.0%

Race 4 01:08PM (A$21,000) **IPSW--1200m**

1	39x4	Boom Girl	59.0	[8]	Hammersle	12.2%	Meagher	10.8%
2		Beyond Desire	58.5	[3]	--		M Dunn	16.9%
3		The Black Tide	58.5	[2]	B Thornton	9.6%	S O'Dea	16.5%
4		True Quality	58.5	[1]	--		M Dunn	16.9%
5	5	Courageous Ch	58.0	[15]	M Hellyer	6.8%	D Hansen	17.0%
6	6	Hibachi Miss	58.0	[10]	A Fancourt	11.4%	T Gollan	14.6%
7	7	Miss Amur	58.0	[11]	D Griffin	13.3%	G Taylor	14.0%
8	x506	Sassy Style	58.0	[16]	Bogen-Hub	12.1%	L Ross	11.7%
9	7	Paddles	57.5	[9]	S Lacy	11.2%	Pritchard	6.4%
10	9	Petra's Spirit	57.5	[13]	G Colless	16.0%	Edmonds	18.0%
11	36x7	Angel Of Leon	57.0	[17]	--		M Costa	16.3%
12	5x5	Larbaud	57.0	[6]	J Taylor	7.1%	Laming	13.6%
13	49x4	Love Of Dubai	57.0	[14]	--		Craft	10.1%
14	x707	Balerion	56.5	[4]	J Hodge-2.0	11.0%	Morrisey	9.4%
15	66x7	Euleilah	56.0	[12]	--		Cotiopoul	5.4%
16	67x9	Top Evie	55.5	[5]	--		T Gollan	14.6%
17	08x7	Majikkutesa	55.5	[7]	--		Morrisey	9.4%

Race 5 01:26PM (A$70,000) **ASCT--1600m**

1	8091	Double Digit	58.0	[4]	A Kennedy	9.9%	A Maley	9.6%
2	2323	Mrs Brown's Boy	58.0	[7]	G Smith	15.3%	A M King	18.4%
3	3424	Reveille	57.0	[1]	D Lane	13.3%	A Durrant	18.3%
4	x112	Royal Statue	57.0	[3]	W Pike	18.1%	A Durrant	18.3%
5	334x	Witness In Court	57.0	[8]	J Turner	9.8%	B Pope	10.1%
6	9363	Nelson's Flight	56.5	[5]	Warwick	14.8%	M Morton	17.9%
7	4217	Rising Sea	56.0	[2]	J Noske	9.8%	Gangemi	12.3%
8	0x31	Let's Twist	55.0	[9]	J Azzopardi	8.6%	Pearce	16.2%
9	0727	Tycoon Target	55.0	[10]	D Staeck	11.5%	Stelmach	9.6%
10	0x76	Wonorg	55.0	[6]	M Autier	8.2%	M Hayley	10.1%

Race 6 01:48PM (A$21,000) **IPSW--1000m**

1	211x	Spurcraft	59.0	[6]	L Tilley	13.7%	C J White	15.4%
2	29x4	I Am The Gener	57.0	[8]	Bogen-Hub	12.1%	M Nolan	15.2%
3	307x	Divine Service	55.0	[4]	A Sewell	7.9%	Duncan	13.7%
4	x313	Basara	54.0	[7]	E Ljung	12.6%	T Sears	16.0%
5	x419	Zouzoukakia	54.0	[3]	M Hellyer	6.8%	K Kemp	11.9%
6	7542	Wudang Blade	54.0	[5]	L Rolls	8.5%	M Wilson	10.3%
7	35x4	Bold Xavvi	54.0	[2]	N Day	12.0%	G Taylor	14.0%
8	2849	Viceman	54.0	[1]	N Thomas	5.1%	Thomas	7.4%

Race 7 02:06PM (A$70,000) **ASCT--2200m**

1	0615	Juicing Carrots	59.0	[4]	C Staples	6.3%	R Reid	4.9%
2	3614	Brother's Keeper	58.5	[13]	T Turner	10.4%	Robertso	9.6%
3	1995	My Fair Beauty	57.0	[5]	G Smith	15.3%	S Wallace	11.0%
4	x302	Mosseratti	56.0	[8]	D Staeck	11.5%	C Green	7.2%
5	5514	Watch Me Ney	56.0	[3]	P Harvey	22.3%	Harrison	11.6%
6	2734	Mr Alby	55.5	[10]	S O'Donnell	10.1%	P Wagg	9.1%
7	1446	Burger Time	55.0	[14]	J Noske	9.8%	Bazeley	9.8%
8	x654	Sentimental Frie	55.0	[2]	W Pike	18.1%	A Durrant	18.3%
9	6781	Thisaway	55.0	[9]	S Mcgruddy	10.2%	Andrews	11.5%
10	5336	Bon Signore	54.0	[6]	S Parnham	7.3%	Stelmach	9.6%
11	x061	Drivin' Me Wild	54.0	[11]	Johnston-P	10.0%	Adams	4.5%
12	0x04	Hay Magic	54.0	[12]	K Witten-2.0	7.9%	Beckett	11.0%
13	4322	Mekong Den	54.0	[1]	J Noske	8.5%	Martinovi	6.6%
14	4955	Upward Others	54.0	[7]	J Azzopardi	8.6%	Mclaren	7.4%

Race 8 02:26PM (A$21,000) **IPSW--1200m**

1	1034	Petain	59.0	[9]	L Rolls	8.5%	K Lees	14.7%
2	4x87	Marrock	58.5	[8]	B Nothdurft	19.4%	B Currie	19.6%
3	768x	Princely Sum	57.5	[1]	A Fancourt	11.4%	Costello	6.6%
4	7x21	Regimental For	57.5	[3]	S Doyle	7.3%	Egglesto	10.6%
5	56x1	Spirit's Pride	57.0	[6]	Bogen-Hub	12.1%	M Nolan	15.2%
6	0198	Bimini Road	56.5	[2]	L Tilley	13.7%	Heathcot	12.8%
7	1	Shaken Not Stirr	56.5	[10]	N Tomizawa	9.1%	M Park	6.1%
8	4712	Okochi Archer	56.0	[5]	J Taylor	7.1%	Laming	13.6%
9	98x0	Slugsnephewjo	55.5	[4]	M Palmer	8.6%	M Palmer	8.3%
10	5x31	Star Adele	55.5	[7]	M Hellyer	6.8%	T Pascoe	13.1%

Race 9 02:43PM (A$100,000) **ASCT--1000m**

1	31x0	Rebel King	59.0	[2]	M Pateman	13.4%	Auliffe	16.3%
2	3676	Profit Street	57.0	[6]	W Pike	18.1%	Giadresc	11.4%
3	15x3	Gee Boss	54.5	[1]	D Lane	13.3%	M L Lane	13.8%
4	7112	The Celt	54.5	[4]	R Tan	7.7%	A M King	18.4%
5	11x1	Ambiente	54.0	[5]	Warwick	14.8%	Strempel	7.9%
6	2294	In Love With Par	54.0	[7]	F W Kersley	9.7%	F Kersley	11.3%
7	3212	Misty Metal	54.0	[3]	S Mcgruddy	10.2%	Harvey	12.5%
8	46x1	Snow Lord	54.0	[8]	C Parnham	11.3%	Williams	24.6%

Race 10 03:03PM (A$21,000) **IPSW--1350m**

1	x0x9	Weston	59.0	[2]	L Dittman	14.7%	M Dunn	16.9%
2	3022	The Launcher	58.5	[4]	N Tomizawa	9.1%	B Currie	19.6%
3	6958	Boss's Boy	56.0	[10]	E Ljung	12.6%	Crompto	12.1%
4	50x3	Gwapo	56.0	[7]	J Hodge-2.0	11.0%	Morrisey	9.4%
5	14x7	Hot Sock	55.5	[9]	--		Heathcot	12.8%
6	x410	La Pulga	55.5	[6]	A Allen	10.2%	M Costa	16.3%
7	1947	Jet'n'wild	54.5	[8]	K Yoshida	10.5%	Hocking	5.3%
8	x006	Fast Vision	54.0	[5]	B Appo	7.6%	Gorman	15.8%
9	x358	Bold Centurion	54.0	[3]	N Day	12.0%	G Taylor	14.0%
10	8700	Brown Lines	54.0	[1]	Shimod-2.0	10.0%	Blake	4.4%

Race 11 03:18PM (A$150,000) **ASCT--1800m**

1	5214	Celebrity Drea	57.5	[2]	W Pike	18.1%	A Durrant	18.3%
2	x631	Fontainebleau	57.5	[4]	G Smith	15.3%	L Smith	17.7%
3	3356	First Affair	56.5	[11]	D Lane	13.3%	A Durrant	18.3%
4	8583	Showcase	55.0	[10]	C Parnham	11.3%	A Durrant	18.3%
5	9612	Lucky Roar	55.0	[5]	J Brown	10.7%	Taylor	15.8%
6	2633	Awesome As	55.0	[1]	S Mcgruddy	10.2%	Smith	7.6%
7	3231	Mouquet	55.0	[8]	D Staeck	11.5%	Wilkinso	8.5%
8	1414	Royal Strata	55.0	[3]	Warwick	14.8%	Warwick	14.1%
9	3777	Sally's Realm	55.0	[12]	P Carbery	9.7%	Williams	24.6%
10	2x83	Oriental Rose	55.0	[7]	Johnston-P	10.0%	D Morton	15.0%
11	9825	Larking	55.0	[6]	L Staples	8.2%	Hampson	2.1%
12	x430	Seeking Alpha	55.0	[9]	J Azzopardi	8.6%	L Smith	17.7%

Race 12 03:55PM (A$70,000) **ASCT--1100m**

1	347x	Key To Fame	59.5	[13]	K Witten-2.0	7.9%	S A Miller	19.3%
2	5x44	Cognac	59.0	[12]	C Staples	6.3%	Jordan	11.0%
3	11x9	Forceful	58.5	[11]	W Pike	18.1%	Williams	24.6%
4	x1x6	Dutch Spy	58.0	[14]	G Smith	15.3%	Roberts	9.3%
5	0x12	Alpha Sky	57.5	[5]	P Carbery	9.7%	S A Miller	19.3%
6	64x5	Cuanzo	57.0	[1]	J Whiting	10.7%	Luciani	11.5%
7	36x2	Disruptive	57.0	[6]	P Harvey	22.3%	L Smith	17.7%
8	68x3	Star Glitter	57.0	[7]	S Parnham	7.3%	Parnham	9.3%
9	55x2	Double Jeopar	56.5	[10]	D Lane	13.3%	Pearce	16.2%
10	4x61	My Demi	56.0	[8]	J Azzopardi	8.6%	Harrison	11.6%
11	4374	Kaapander	55.5	[4]	J Noske	9.8%	P Farrell	9.4%
12	8659	Denim Pack	54.0	[9]	L Staples	8.2%	Santich	5.3%
13	8x23	Shackleton	54.0	[2]

MAKING KIDS 'FALL IN LOVE' WITH ATHLETICS



Wan Lay Chi's career high was winning the shot put silver for Singapore behind compatriot Zhang Guirong at the 2011 SEA Games. LIANHE ZAOBAO FILE PHOTO

Former thrower Wan opens sports academy today to groom next generation of athletes

Nicole Chia

Former Singapore thrower Wan Lay Chi may have quit being a competitive athlete five years ago, but the sport was always on her mind.

Her love for the sport remained so strong that she left her job as a sports manager at the British Club in July to start coaching schools, and will open a track and field academy today for children aged four to 11.

Wan told The Straits Times she had been mulling over it for at least a year, but found the courage to do so only recently, after saving enough money and receiving encouragement from her friends.

"As a coach, I just love what I do. You get this sense of satisfaction when you see the kids who didn't know anything at first improving, then slowly becoming more ambitious and starting to set goals like wanting to throw this far or to run this fast," she added.

"Then you feel like, 'Wah'. I hope I can contribute a little bit by passing on my experience and knowledge to the younger ones."

The 2011 SEA Games shot put silver medallist left the sport in 2013 because she was frustrated with a perceived lack of support from Singapore Athletics, then the Singapore Athletic Association.

At 30, she "sees no point" in a competitive comeback but wants to groom young athletes.

She will manage and coach at the Team Wan Sports Academy, which is based at Bedok Stadium, with fellow coach Kevin Leong. It will feature athletics disciplines including sprints, throws and jumps.

Wan, who aims to include other sports in the programme, is aware of the slight difference between coaching schools and running an academy, noting that the latter would involve creative learning so as to make training more fun.

She also stressed that it is important for her charges to try the different disciplines and to enjoy them, adding: "You have to be very careful not to over-train these young kids. Being too specialised at this age is bad for their development.

"Hopefully, they will fall in love with track and field. At the end of the day, it's just about promoting track and field as a sport."

Wan, who still holds several national age-group records in shot put and discus, also hopes to identify talent that can raise the level of track and field here.

"I hope I can inspire more young throwers to reach where I was, or to become better than me," she said.

Explaining her desire to contribute to the local athletics scene, she said: "This sport changed my life. After school, I trained every day instead of making trouble and I became more motivated first to win the Schools Nationals competition, then to break records, and then (to do well) at the Asean Schools Games.

"Now, when it comes to work, I make sure I give of my best instead of just doing things for the sake of it.

"This sport has made me who I am today."

Singapore Athletics president Tang Weng Fei, who knew Wan during her days as a competitive athlete, believes her initiative bodes well for the local sports fraternity.

"I think it's a good thing. It will reinforce the fact that in sport, you may not necessarily earn a lot of money but, at least, you can make a livelihood and have a small business," he said.

"Lay Chi has been away for some time, but people still remember her and it's good that an ex-national athlete has come back in this way."

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Above: India's Cheteshwar Pujara celebrating after reaching 150 runs in the fourth and final cricket Test against Australia in Sydney. He fell seven runs short of a double ton.

Right: Rishabh Pant was 159 not out when India captain Virat Kohli declared their first innings at 622 for seven. PHOTOS: AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Tall order for Aussies with India in command

SYDNEY • A marathon century by Cheteshwar Pujara and a swashbuckling ton from Rishabh Pant all but ended Australia's hopes of saving the cricket series yesterday, as India built a massive 622 for seven declared in the final Sydney Test.

The tourists began the second day at 303 for four and proceeded to twist the knife against a demoralised home team who toiled in hot conditions with little joy.

Unless Australia win, India will claim a first-ever series victory Down Under since they began touring here in 1947-48. They lead 2-1.

Despite the tall task ahead, Australia skipper Tim Paine said they were not ready to throw in the towel.

"We certainly won't be doing that, we will be fighting as hard as we can for the next three days. Cricket's one of those games, if you keep doing that, it can turn really quickly," he said.

"But you've got to tip your cap to India. They have worked extremely hard for 3½ Tests to get us to where they want us today."

Pujara made a masterful 193 off 373 balls, while Pant stroked to his highest Test score in an entertaining 159 not out.

Ravindra Jadeja chipped in with a lively 81 in a 204-run stand with Pant, a record seventh-wicket partnership at the Sydney Cricket Ground.

Skipper Virat Kohli finally declared when Jadeja was out, with the tireless Nathan Lyon taking 4-178 off 57.2 gruelling overs.

It left new-look Australian openers Marcus Harris (19) and Usman Khawaja (5) to negotiate 10 tricky overs before stumps after a torturous day in the field. They ended at 24 without loss.

"Every hundred I score is special for me because I have just started my career. But I don't really think about hundreds, I only think about what the team needs from me," said Pant, who sympathised with the Australian bowlers.

"Obviously when you bowl for two days, the body gets tired, but their body language was really good, they were pushing themselves and trying their level best."

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

AUSTRALIA V INDIA
4th Test, day 3: Singtel TV Ch123 & StarHub Ch236, 7.30am

Next 48 Hours

TODAY

BASKETBALL
ABL Formosa Dreamers v CLS Knights Indonesia (StarHub TV Ch202, 3pm).

CRICKET
4th & final Test Australia v India: Day 3 (Singtel TV Ch123 & StarHub Ch236, 7.30am).

FOOTBALL
AFC Asian Cup Group A: UAE v Bahrain (Singtel TV Ch114 & StarHub Ch208, 11.50pm).
English FA Cup 3rd rd: Man United v Reading (8.25pm), Chelsea v Nottingham Forest (10.55pm), Blackpool v Arsenal (tomorrow, 1.25am) – Singtel TV Ch111. Shrewsbury v Stoke (8.25pm), Gillingham v Cardiff (10.55pm), Newcastle v Blackburn (tomorrow, 1.25am) – Ch112. West Ham v Birmingham (8.25pm), Everton v Lincoln (10.55pm), Palace v Grimsby (tomorrow, 1.25am) – Ch113.
Spanish LaLiga Valladolid v Rayo (7.55pm), Alaves v Valencia (11.10pm), Huesca v Betis (tomorrow, 3.40am) – StarHub Ch213.

SPEED SKATING
SEA Open Short Track Trophy Day 1 (7.30am). Day 2 (tomorrow, 6.10am) – The Rink@JCube.

TENNIS
Hopman Cup Final: Germany v Switzerland (Singtel TV Ch115 & StarHub Ch209, 5pm).
ATP Maharashtra Open Final (Ch201, 7.30pm).

TOMORROW

BASKETBALL
ABL Malaysia Dragons v HK Eastern (StarHub TV Ch201, 2.30pm), Formosa Dreamers v S'pore Slingers (3pm), Saigon Heat v Mono Vampire (5pm), Alab Pilipinas v Zhuhai Wolf Warriors (8pm) – Ch202.

CRICKET
4th & final Test Australia v India: Day 4 (Singtel TV Ch123 & StarHub Ch236, 7.30am).

FOOTBALL
AFC Asian Cup Group B: Australia v Jordan (6.50pm), Syria v Palestine (11.50pm). Group A: Thailand v India (9.20pm) – Singtel TV Ch114 & StarHub Ch208.
English FA Cup 3rd rd: Man City v Rotherham (9.55pm), Newport County v Leicester (Monday, 12.25am) – Singtel TV Ch111. Woking v Watford (Ch112, 9.55pm). Fulham v Oldham Athletic (Ch113, 9.55pm).
Spanish LaLiga Eibar v Villarreal (6.55pm), Sevilla v Atletico (11.10pm), Real Madrid v Sociedad (Monday, 1.25am), Getafe v Barcelona (Monday, 3.40am) – StarHub Ch213.

TENNIS
ATP/WTA Brisbane International Day 7: Men's singles final (Singtel TV Ch115 & StarHub Ch209, 5pm).

Live telecast times are subject to change. For latest updates, go to singteltv.com.sg & starhubgo.com or check the on-screen TV guide.

A game of two halves

ST correspondent Sazali Abdul Aziz and host Jonathan Roberts discuss whether Liverpool can lift the EPL trophy while looking ahead to the year in sport:
http://str.sg/o6Qu



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Life is about change, sometimes it's painful, sometimes it's beautiful, but most of the time it's both.

– Kristin Kreuk

Live more, Bank less

Cool co-working spaces



DESIGN: SALLY LAM ST PHOTO: JASMINE CHOONG

As competition heats up and big players muscle in, shared working spaces are no longer cramped, low-cost options for start-ups. They are designed to make you want to go to work and stay there. Michelle Ng reports. D4&5

The common spaces in home-grown co-working operator JustCo's 13th centre at Marina Square.



RootAwakening

Leaves of wild pepper used as food wrap and in salads

I found this plant (right) in my garden. Is it edible? It looks like a vegetable.
Lim Lily



The plant is commonly called wild pepper or daun kaduk.

Its botanical name is Piper sarmentosum and it is a native plant of Singapore.

It thrives under semi-shaded conditions and is commonly planted as a groundcover in outdoor landscapes.

Its leaves have a spicy flavour and have been used to wrap snacks.

Sliced leaves are added to nasi ulam, a traditional Malay herb rice salad.

Bellorita needs open area to thrive

I found this plant (right) growing in an open-air carpark and took some back to repot in a plastic container. The plant is small and looks like it can be grown in a terrarium. The diameter of the pot is about 7cm. What is the name of this plant?
Andrew Wong



The plant is botanically known as Erigeron bellioides and its common name is Bellorita.

While it is tempting to use this plant in an enclosed terrarium, the plant may not do well due to the lack of light and high humidity.

This plant grows naturally in open areas where sunlight is plentiful. The glass terrarium can scatter light, reducing the amount that can reach the plant for photosynthesis.

The plant may, however, be more suited to an open container garden situated in an area where it can get at least six hours of direct sunlight daily.



Check Tie Shu's health before regrowing

I would like to regrow this plant (above). Can it still be regrown a month after it has shed all its leaves? What is the name of this plant and how can I help it to regrow?
Cheong Kum Thong

The shedding of leaves of your "Tie Shu" (its botanical name is Dracaena fragrans) may be due to disease caused by the lack of sunlight, lack of water or an overly wet root zone.

Whether the plant can be revived will depend on how advanced the disease is.

First, cut the top of the stem to see if the plant is still alive and healthy. A dead or unhealthy stem will be dry or black on the inside.

If the stem is still alive and healthy, you need to check the roots to see if they are healthy and alive too.

Take the plant out from its pot and inspect its roots. Healthy roots will appear white and firm, while dead and unhealthy ones will appear black, mushy and empty on the inside.

If only part of the stem is healthy, you can cut the stem until you reach the healthy portion. Cut the bottom part of the stem to remove an unhealthy or dead root system.

What you get now as a result is a stem-cutting, which you can plant in fresh potting mix that is kept moist at all times.

Keep the stem-cutting in a location that has some filtered sunshine. Once new roots are produced, new growth will appear at the top of the stem.

Ensure your Tie Shu is placed in a location that receives at least four hours of filtered sunshine for optimal growth of the plant.

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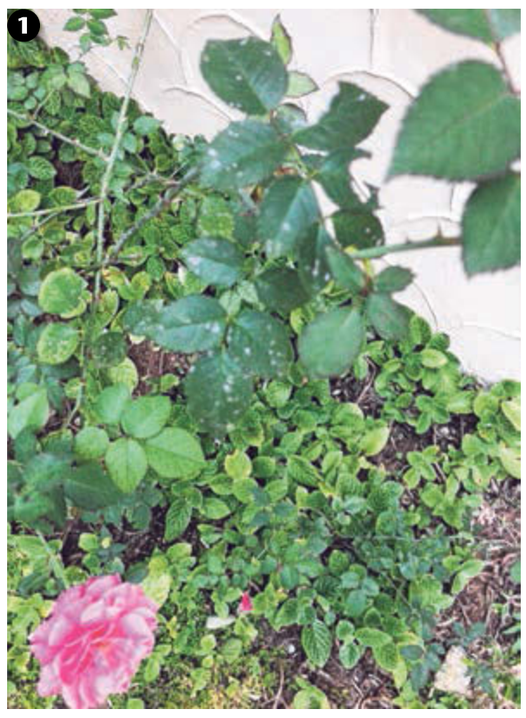
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Rose plant has fungal disease, episcia affected by sunburn

There are white spots on the leaves of my rose plant (photo 1). Also, why do some of the leaves of the episcia (photo 2) become light green or yellowish? I have not applied liquid fertiliser for some time. Can these leaves become healthy and green again?
Oei Khoen Hwa

Your rose plant appears to be infected by powdery mildew, a fungal disease. Affected leaves need to be removed to contain the spread.

The disease can be prevented by applying fungicides, such as chemical ones like captan, which are available from most nurseries.

As for your Flame Violet (episcia), you may want to check if it has been sunburnt much earlier on – this can be seen through the yellowing on the older leaves.

The plant is a shade-loving species and susceptible to burning by direct sunlight. The damaged leaves cannot be restored to look healthy, but will be replaced by new growth over time.

Mother-in-Law's Tongue needs more light

How do I maintain this plant (right) so that the leaves do not dry easily and fall off? Does the plant require direct sunlight?
Eunice Chua



The plant is commonly called Snake-skin Plant or Mother-in-Law's Tongue (botanical name – Sansevieria trifasciata). The plant seems to have only a few remaining leaves and this condition is typical of plants grown in a dim location.

Although the plant is often said to be a shade-tolerant one, it performs better if it is exposed to at least four hours of filtered sunlight daily. It can be adapted to grow under direct sunlight.

The soil needs to be well-drained. After watering, it should be allowed to dry out a little before the next watering. Prolonged wet feet will lead to rot. Excessive dryness will also cause the plant to decline.

stlife@sph.com.sg

• Answers by Dr Wilson Wong, an NParks-certified practising horticulturist and park manager. He is the founder of Green Culture Singapore and an adjunct assistant professor (Food Science & Technology) at the National University of Singapore.

• Have a gardening query? E-mail it with clear, high-resolution pictures of at least 1MB, if any, and your full name to stlife@sph.com.sg

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Shared offices up the ante

In line with rising demand from SMEs and global firms, co-working operators roll out facilities with options for customisation, retail showcase shelves and specialised looks for specific industries



Michelle Ng

Once thought of as cramped, low-cost shared offices for aspiring start-ups and freelancers, co-working spaces have gotten snazzier, more photogenic and more customised along the way.

Increasingly, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and global companies looking to set up a branch in Singapore can be found in these trendy spaces, say experts.

"Demand from corporate occupiers has been one of the biggest expansion drivers of co-working in Asian cities over the last two years, including Singapore," says Ms Christine Li, senior director of research at global property services firm Cushman & Wakefield, which released a report on the co-working trend in the Asia-Pacific region last year.

One such company is Wilson Associates, a luxury interior design firm from Dallas, Texas, which moved into a private office space within co-working space JustCo at Marina Square in November.

It has its own private entrance, reception, waiting area, two meeting rooms and a mini pantry – all furnished with custom-made furniture and rugs imported from Portugal.

Opened in July, JustCo at Marina Square occupies 60,000 sq ft on the third floor of the mall and houses more than 1,000 members. It is the home-grown co-working operator's 13th location in Singapore.



Wilson Associates' office here, with around 100 employees, takes up about one-sixth of its total floor area, making it JustCo's biggest tenant.

"What's great about this office set-up is that we can have our own private space, but we can also go out to have a nice coffee in the shared pantry for a change of scenery," says Wilson Associates' business development manager Tina Xie, 29.

The company was previously located in Tampines Grande, an office building that she felt was "too corporate" for the company's "more forward-looking" branding.

In an unusual move, the interior design firm opted to design and furnish its new office at its own cost.

Typically, tenants in co-working spaces just make do with the existing furnished spaces provided by the co-working operators.

To cater to its lifestyle and retail clientele, JustCo at Marina Square also has retail showcase shelves scattered throughout its shared areas. For a small fee, its tenants, such as deals platform Fave, can display their products on the shelves for browsing or purchase.

These options to customise office spaces are just one of the ways the estimated 120 co-working spaces here are trying to differentiate themselves from one another as the competition heats up.

According to the 2018 Cushman & Wakefield report, co-working operators in Singapore have increased from 19 in 2014 to 36 last year. The number of co-working spaces has also almost doubled, from 66 to 120.

Initially, these were quaint boutique spaces run by local co-working operators, such as HackerspaceSG in Lavender – which opened in 2009 and is still in operation.

Today, the co-working landscape looks drastically different as big international players have muscled in with swanky outfits of more than 1,000 desks.

One of them, New York-based WeWork, with 400 co-working spaces across 99 cities, opened nine locations in Singapore within a year, starting with its Beach Road outlet in December 2017.

In Singapore alone, it currently has more than 5,500 desks, with almost half of its membership base comprising companies that employ more than 1,000 people worldwide.

Mr Turochas Fuad, managing director of WeWork Southeast Asia, says: "Gone are the days of traditional cubicle office spaces. We are transforming open spaces that enable big companies to meet potential hires and interact directly with customers."

Beyond being a place to toil, co-working spaces are now where you can stage client meetings with pride.

Upping the ante further, co-working operators are refining their look to attract more niche industries.

At Hong Kong-based operator The Work Project's second outlet at Parkview Square in North Bridge Road, the vibe is hospitality-inspired. The circular arrival lounge of the 15,000 sq ft space is decked out in pleated leather and warm lighting, not unlike a five-star hotel lobby. Opened in October, it has a capacity of 300 desks and is reaching 60 per cent occupancy.

The Work Project's first 24,000 sq ft location in OUE Downtown Gallery has a similar hospitality-inspired vibe and is fully occupied. Its biggest tenant at this outlet is Australia-based property developer Lendlease, which occupies 80 desks.

But not all shared working space operators have been successful in transforming themselves or hitting their target markets.

Ms Dalillah Ismail, 27, started Camelia & Co in November from a heritage shophouse in Kampong Glam to cater to the creative industry. She spent about $150,000 overhauling the three-storey space, using bold colours, snazzy wallpaper and light wood panelling to create a trendy and hip vibe. But she has found herself with a mixed bag of tenants, ranging from a trading company to an online retail app start-up. At present, 20 of the 50 desks are filled, with more tenants joining over the next few months.

However, she is banking on her cosy appeal. "We're a small space and very homely, so maybe that's why smaller companies from various industries, which may be intimidated by bigger co-working spaces, come to us," she says.

On the ground floor of the shophouse is Stack, a halal cafe operated by The Black Hole Group, which is both a tenant and a business partner.

Undaunted, Ms Dalillah is on the hunt for a location for her next outlet – a tech-centric co-working space. "I'm looking into the needs of tech industries and thinking of ideas on how the next location can create a better working environment for this particular group," she says.

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The vibe at New York-based WeWork's outlet (left) at Suntec City Tower 5 is bright and breezy; Hong Kong-based operator The Work Project's Parkview Square outlet (above) boasts hospitality-inspired interiors; and home-grown Camelia & Co (below) uses bold colours to create a hip atmosphere for its shared offices. PHOTOS: CAMELIA & CO, HASSELL STUDIO, JUSTCO, WEWORK





Co-working operator JustCo's Marina Square outlet (above) houses more than 1,000 members, with its biggest tenant being American luxury interior design firm Wilson Associates (left).

Demand from corporate occupiers has been one of the biggest expansion drivers of co-working in Asian cities over the last two years, including Singapore.

MS CHRISTINE LI, senior director of research at global property services firm Cushman & Wakefield, which released a report on the co-working trend in the Asia-Pacific region last year







Russia's new design track

Once famed for its Stalin-era stations with chandeliers and mosaics, Moscow's metro system is getting a contemporary look



Cylindrical white light boxes (above) double as seats at the Solntsevo metro station; while artworks (left) dot the walls of the Fonvizinskaya station. PHOTOS: AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

MOSCOW • Moscow's metro system is riding a new design train.

Famed for its Stalin-era stations with glittering chandeliers and mosaics, the network is undergoing a massive expansion and architects are taking a radical new approach.

While the original stations were conceived as "palaces for the people", the new designs are less formal with light boxes for seats and laser-printed glass patterns.

In a major break with tradition, the Moscow city government has allowed independent architects to submit designs for several new stations in competitions that included a public vote on a phone app.

It has paved the way for "truly interesting and original stations that are outside any tradition", said architecture journalist Nina Frolova.

The first of these to open is in the high-rise suburb of Solntsevo, once notorious for its local mafia.

Moscow's Nefa Architects won with a design inspired by the sun. "We wanted to let the sun inside," said Nefa's lead architect Dmitry Ovcharov.

Holes were punched in the walls of the station entrances to "create light and shadow", he added.

Down on the platform, cylindrical white light boxes serve as seats.

Last year, the transport system, which dates back to 1935, opened 16 new stations and carried around two billion passengers.

Ms Frolova, editorial director at the Archi.ru architecture website, said Solntsevo is a bright example of new metro trends.

"There's a concept that any passenger can see. It feels pleasant being in the station."

Another architect with a winning station design, Ms Tatiana Leontieva of Moscow's Blank Architects, said the prestige of the commission was a draw. She was part of a team who designed a station called Rzhevskaya, which will have an "archway" theme in a nod to its location near a mainline railway station.

The brief was to create a station for "the new times", she said, using Russian materials and "without excessive decoration".

"There was a large number of applications and (the competition) had a big impact, not just on the Russian architectural scene but abroad too because a lot of people wanted to get their hands on a site like the Moscow metro."

The historic Moscow metro was a monumental construction in the 1930s, built as an example of quality and solidity, symbolising the grandeur of leader Josef Stalin and the young Soviet Union.

The country's history was told in the mosaics that adorned the stations' walls and the metro could serve as a bunker if needed.

Previously, state company Metrogiprotrans had a monopoly on the transport system's architecture and it still designs the majority of new stations. But it is also modernising.

The company's latest station interiors feature laser-printed designs on glass or glossy aluminium panels – a simple approach that Ms Frolova said also works. "I think they kept a good balance with not many details and some simple, modern forms." AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE











PHOTOS: YANG

SPECS / HYUNDAI i30 N

Price: $145,999 with COE

Engine: 1,998cc 16-valve inline-4 turbocharged

Transmission: Six-speed manual

Power: 250hp at 6,000rpm

Torque: 353Nm at 4,000rpm

0-100kmh: 6.4 seconds

Top speed: 250kmh

Fuel consumption: 7 litres/100km (tested)

Agent: Komoco Motors

Unexpected hot hatch

Hyundai's surprisingly racy i30N is more than just a family car

Wong Kai Yi

The Hyundai i30 N is equipped with a 2-litre four-cylinder turbocharged motor, kicking out 250hp and 353Nm of torque to the front wheels through a six-speed manual gearbox.

With the i30 moniker, you would think the Hyundai i30 N is just a family car with some upgraded bits added. But you would be wrong.

In its maiden attempt to make a hot hatch, Hyundai has come out with guns blazing. And rightly so, considering its competition.

That includes the 306hp Honda Civic Type R and the 286hp Volkswagen Golf R, two time-tested legends.

But at $145,999, the i30 N undercuts the two by a fair bit. And it is packed with features.

The car was created at Hyundai's Namyang tech centre and tuned at Germany's Nurburgring circuit, hence the "N".

The result is a shockingly good hot hatch.

While not entirely handsome, the i30 N has interesting looks. With a sky-blue paint job and custom decals on the test-car, you will never miss it in a carpark.

The interior is typical Hyundai – meaning a well-constructed and solid (if plain) cabin, complete with Apple Carplay/Android Auto head unit, Isofix points and plenty of storage.

The star, however, is a 2-litre four-cylinder turbocharged motor, kicking out 250hp and 353Nm of torque to the front wheels through a six-speed manual gearbox.

The manual moves with fluid precision and sublime slickness – a proud anachronism amid today's modern automatic gearboxes.

On the road in Normal mode, the i30 N maintains a ride unsettled by only the biggest undulations.

It feels supple and controlled over large bumps despite large 18-inch Michelin Pilot Super Sport and unforgiving sidewalls.

But find a patch of twisty road and the blue N mode steering wheel button on the steering wheel begs to be pushed.

When activated, the car instantly transforms from highway cruiser to battlecruiser.

The adaptive suspension stiffens, the steering weights up and the exhaust becomes an outlet through which hydrocarbons are converted into rapid-fire pops and bangs.

Blast down a deserted road, holding the revs above 5,000rpm, and the car comes alive, as if invoking the spirit of its rallying forebears.

Take corners at speeds which would make your rear passengers sick and the i30 N simply grips as if on rails, with the steering giving you plenty of feedback – even if you push too hard.

But if you are not fond of visiting your chiropractor too often, you can dial down the vice-like suspension stiffness through N custom mode.

You can decide how racy you want the engine or chassis settings to be and even see how many Gs you are pulling.

Hard-driving as the i30 N is, it is a good first try from Hyundai. The South Korean car-maker has proven that it can create an operatic masterpiece as well as it can make competent everyday cars.

stlife@sph.com.sg

• The writer is with Torque, a motoring monthly published by SPH Magazines.





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Anything about cars, you find at AUTOBACS

Christopher Tan
In Yokohama, Japan

The first car I reviewed – 30 years ago this month – was a sleek, sporty Nissan 200SX coupe.

For my 30th anniversary, I have another Nissan but, this time, a chic electric carrier called Leaf.

It is the second iteration, which is more elegant, more powerful and more functional. But most crucially, it has a range of at least 250km – double that of its predecessor.

Size-wise, the car is slightly longer and wider, and nearly as tall. It is interesting to note that the new Leaf is slightly taller than the Lexus UX crossover, as its floor is raised to accommodate the sealed lithium-ion battery pack below.

The battery pack is the same size as before, but weighs a tad more. Its capacity, however, has soared from 30kWh (facelifted first-generation version) to 40kWh – giving it its extended range.

At 1,520kg, the Leaf is 40kg heavier than before, on account of its expanded size and heftier battery. But it is more aerodynamic, with a drag-coefficient of 0.27 (0.29 previously).

Inside, the car has a highly functional, unpretentious cabin. It is less avant-garde than the previous one, but boasts a better build quality.

A compact tablet-like infotainment touchscreen with phone connectivity, 360-degree camera and navigation sits unobtrusively on the centre console. A shift lever, which looks like a flattened pool ball, facilitates selections with minimal effort.

Fore of this are two tabs: one for Eco mode and the other, E-pedal, which allows you to drive the car with just the accelerator. Each time you lift off, the regenerative braking is so strong it will slow the car down to a crawl and then a complete stop.

A multi-function steering wheel has the usual finger-tip controls, plus ProPilot, which is a semi-autonomous feature found in upmarket cars. When activated, the car goes on cruise control, keeping a safe distance from the vehicle in front and keeping in lane. This, however, lasts only for about 10 seconds, before the system prompts you to put your hands back on the wheel.

SPECS / NISSAN LEAF

Price: $158,000 with COE (estimated)
Motor: Single front-mounted synchronous
Transmission: Single-speed
Power: 110kW at 3,238-9,795rpm
Torque: 320Nm at 0-3,283rpm
0-100kmh: 7.9 seconds
Top speed: 140kmh
Consumption: 14.3kWh/100km (estimated)
Agent: Tan Chong Motor



The Nissan Leaf has a lively electric drivetrain, with 110kW of power and 320Nm of instant torque.
ST PHOTOS: CHRISTOPHER TAN

SCAN TO WATCH Test-driving the new Nissan Leaf

Nissan's second-generation electric Leaf offers more power, more functions and a longer range of at least 250km

The Leaf's main selling point is its lively electric drivetrain. Compared with its predecessor, it is a lot more driveable. It has 110kW of power and 320Nm of instant torque, versus 80kW and 254Nm previously.

This translates to a punchy performance appreciated on highways, city roads and mountain passes.

The test-route starts from Nissan's headquarters in Yokohama's business district, towards Mount Hakone and back. The first stretch pretty much comprises city roads. The car impresses with its quiet operation – as expected of an electric vehicle – and cushioned ride. Like many Japanese cars, it is easy to pilot.

You can choose to drive it in E-pedal mode for the highest power regeneration rate, in Eco or in the default normal mode. In the city, the car is quite liveable in any of these three modes. But on highways, it is best in normal mode, which allows for better coasting.

E-pedal comes into its own along serpentine stretches. Here, you can lift off to slow down when entering a corner, and squeezing the throttle again to make a clean exit.

The battery pack acts as a ballast to steady the car in these manoeuvres. It drives and feels like a sharply-tuned hatch, sticking to the tarmac, staying in line and betraying the slightest of body roll.

E-pedal mode allows you to slow down without the pitching motion associated with braking, which again makes the car more enjoyable – even for passengers.

In the second row, knee and legroom are more than ample for a car its size. And despite its rather rudimentary rear suspension, ride comfort is surprisingly decent. The only downside is a protruding hump in the middle of the floor, which Nissan says is for structural rigidity.

The new Leaf has a stated range of 270km under the Worldwide Harmonised Light Vehicle Test Procedure, which is some 40 per cent better than its predecessor. Going by the remaining range at the end of this test-drive, the car is good for at least 250km, despite a spirited hill-climb segment.

The trip may not be as pulse-raising as if it was done in a 200SX, but it is definitely more comfortable and relaxing.

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Sedans dominate in ST-Torque awards

Sedans garnered the biggest share in Torque's list of top cars last year.

The Skoda Superb, Lexus ES and BMW M5 were named Best Sedan, Best Luxury Sedan and Best Performance Sedan respectively.

Hatchbacks and sport utility vehicles (SUV) followed. The Suzuki Swift was named Best Compact Hatchback and the Renault Megane RS is the Best Hot Hatch.

The Volvo XC40 clinched the Best Five-seater SUV title, while the Skoda Kodiaq landed the Best Seven-seater SUV title.

In its latest instalment of annual awards held together with The Straits Times, Singapore's leading motoring monthly honoured 10 top cars – including the Straits Times Car of the Year 2018, the Kia Stinger.

Cycle & Carriage's deputy director of Kia operations Dawn Pan said: "It's exhilarating for the Kia Stinger to clinch the coveted ST Car of the Year award. More so because this is the first for a Korean car.

"In addition, it is also a great recognition for what is essentially a game-changing product that has contributed to the strengthening of Kia's brand name."

Sharing the honours on the top 10 list are the Audi RS4 Avant (Best Performance Wagon) and the Hyundai Ioniq Electric (Best Compact Fastback).

Volkswagen-owned Czech brand Skoda stood out in this annual best-in-class award. It is the only brand to clinch two titles.

Volkswagen Group Singapore managing director Ricky Tay said: "To win not one but two awards is a great honour for us. It not only marks the brand's success since its return to the Singapore market mid-last year, but it is also an affirmation from our customers.

"More importantly, under Volkswagen Group Singapore, we have not only launched award-winning cars... but also sharpened and re-aligned Skoda as a brand in all dimensions."



The ST-Torque awards undergo a rigorous vetting and scoring process by a panel of 11 independent judges. In the final outcome, the Kia Stinger scored a comfortable lead to emerge as ST Car of the Year.

Torque consulting editor and The Straits Times senior correspondent Christopher Tan said: "The Stinger is Kia's first grand tourer attempt. As it turns out, it is far more than a creditable attempt. The car surpasses all expectations for something that costs less than $200,000 – and by a wide margin too."

Torque associate editor Jeremy Chua added: "The Stinger has shown what Kia can achieve. This fastback is eye-catching, relatively quick, quite practical and hugely fun to drive. It was my favourite car last year. And as it turns out, many on the Torque team think so too."

Find out what the other judges have to say about the cream of 2018's crop in the latest issue of Torque.

You can also read about the Torque group test: Mini Cooper 5-Door versus Volkswagen Golf versus Opel Astra.

• Torque is out at newsstands now.



Electric avenue

Those looking to plug into an electric ride will be spoilt for choice this year

Christopher Tan
Senior Correspondent

Elon Musk can whine all he wants, but 2019 will be the year car buyers in Singapore will be able to plug into a wide array of electric rides.

No fewer than 10 new electrified cars – either fully battery-powered or innovative hybrid models – are slated to be launched over the next 12 months here – a market the Tesla chief labelled in a yet another Tweet as "unwelcome" for e-vehicles.

The slew of e-rides will be supported by an expanding network of charging points, not least the 1,000 which SP Group will have up by 2020.

The following is a rundown of the new electrified models.

christan@sph.com.sg

AUDI E-TRON

This electric five-seater sport utility vehicle (SUV, right), like the Jaguar I-Pace, is driven by two electric motors powered by a 95kWh battery. It has 356hp and up to 664Nm of torque at its disposal, allowing it to accomplish the century sprint in 5.7 seconds. It has a stated range of 400km and is due in the third quarter of the year. Expect to pay close to $400,000 for the first of many electric Audis.



BMW I3S 120AH

The carbon-fibre tall hatch from Bavaria gets a bigger battery and nearly twice the range of the original i3. It is due in the second quarter of the year and estimated to cost $162,000 before a certificate of entitlement.



HYUNDAI KONA ELECTRIC

Following the Ioniq Electric sedan, Hyundai will introduce a battery-powered variant of its Kona compact crossover (above) this month. There are two versions – a 39kWh one with a range of more than 300km, and a 64kWh one which can cover 480km between plug-ins. Prices range from $137,999 to $168,999.



JAGUAR I-PACE

This luxury electric SUV (above) from Jaguar boasts two motors powered by a 90kWh battery. It has 400hp and 696Nm of torque on tap, allowing it to zip to 100kmh in 4.8 seconds.

The car, priced between $346,999 and $369,999, will be unveiled later this month.



KIA NIRO EV

The Niro Hybrid (above) is quite peachy, so its full-electric twin should be something worth waiting for. And the wait will not be too long, as the car is slated to arrive by next month. It is expected to cost about $160,000.

NISSAN LEAF

The second generation of Nissan's electric Leaf (see pages C8 and 9)– a best-selling zero-emission car in many markets – will be unveiled later this month. It has a real-world driving range of 250km, allowing you to drive comfortably to Malacca at one go. It is chock-full with features and expected to go for under $160,000.

NISSAN SERENA E-POWER

This multi-purpose vehicle drives like an electric car, but is actually a hybrid. But unlike most hybrids, the Nissan's e-Power system consists of a small petrol engine, which acts as a generator to keep its battery constantly charged. The battery then drives the motor to drive the car. The innovative Serena will be launched in the second half of this year, with a price tag of around $136,000, going by current certificate of entitlement premiums.



PHOTOS: AUDI, HYUNDAI MOTOR REUTERS

PORSCHE TAYCAN

This sizzling electric cruiser from Stuttgart could arrive by year-end. Promising Tesla-rivalling performance, the Taycan (above, pronounced ty-cahn) is said to pack more than 600bhp and a century sprint time of under 3.5 seconds. With a high-powered motor at each axle, the electrified Porsche will also offer the roadholding of an all-wheel-drive.

SUBARU FORESTER E-BOXER

The hybrid concept, pioneered by Toyota, is more than 20 years old. But what will it feel like in a car famed for its horizontally opposed "boxer" engines and symmetrical all-wheel-drive chassis? The answer is probably within the Forester e-Boxer, which will be unveiled very soon. It pairs a 12hp electric motor with a 2-litre engine to produce more boost and more efficiency.

VOLVO S60 T8

This plug-in petrol-electric hybrid from Volvo is tuned by Polestar (Volvo's sports department) and may arrive by year-end. It has 400hp from a twin-charged four-cylinder driving the front wheels as well as an electric motor driving the rear axle.





Coming to your TV screen: podcasts



Julia Roberts and Stephan James star in Homecoming, an Amazon series based on a fictional podcast. PHOTO: REUTERS

Television networks are mining podcasts, some with complex stories for material for their shows

LOS ANGELES • Film mogul Darryl F. Zanuck was among the sceptics in the years before networks started broadcasting shows seven nights a week.

"Television won't be able to hold on to any market it captures after the first six months," he infamously predicted.

"People will soon get tired of staring at a plywood box every night."

To make sure that television sets would become something more than ungainly appliances, entertainment executives of the late 1940s and early 1950s went in search of programming.

And they found it within earshot, in radio shows like The Lone Ranger, Our Miss Brooks and Dragnet, which were among the first television hits.

With the rise of streaming, the entertainment industry is going through a similar transformation.

Executives at Netflix, Amazon and Apple are spending wildly for content, which has created a sense of urgency among rivals at broadcast networks and cable channels.

And like their predecessors, they have been aggressive about buying up ready-made programming to fill their expanding slates. These days, that means podcasts.

Homecoming, the Amazon series starring Julia Roberts, is based on a fictional podcast from Gimlet Media.

Bravo's Dirty John, with Eric Bana in the role of a conman, is based on a true crime series from The Los Angeles Times and podcast network Wondery.

Mr Hernan Lopez, a former Fox executive who founded Wondery, has blurred distinctions between the podcasting world and Hollywood by giving his shows tag lines, trailers and advertising billboards.

"I set out to create a company that could build on bringing to podcasting the skillset of television and movies, in storytelling and production, as well as marketing," he said.

Mr Ben Silverman, co-chief executive of Propagate, said podcasts make for good source material, partly because their fans are not passive.

"It's a very active process to download a podcast," said Mr Silverman, whose company is working on an adaptation of Sword And Scale, a true crime podcast from Wondery.

As podcasts have become more elaborate, with complex stories complete with cliffhangers, narrative reversals and subplots, the main action in adaptations has shifted towards scripted series.

Mindful of the trend, Gimlet hired Ms Jenny Wall, a former Hulu and Netflix executive, as chief marketing officer to help the company better navigate Hollywood.

Gimlet has teamed with Blumhouse Television, an arm of the company that made the film Get Out (2017), to create a television version of its limited-run horror podcast The Horror Of Dolores Roach.

Gladiator, a podcast made by Wondery and The Boston Globe's Spotlight investigative team that focused on American football player Aaron Hernandez, who committed suicide after being convicted of murder, is in development at FX.

Other Wondery shows in the works for television are Dr Death, about a neurosurgeon accused of malpractice, and Business Wars, a series centred on corporate rivalries.

Not every podcast survives the move from the intimacy of audio to the brighter, broader medium of television.

ABC sitcom Alex, Inc, based on the Gimlet podcast Start Up, lasted all of 10 episodes.

But in a time of expansion, with demand outstripping supply, executives at podcast companies know they have something the entertainment industry needs.

"We've prepared most of the meal," said Mr Matt Lieber, president of Gimlet.

"Now, you just have to put it on the table and eat." NYTIMES

• Homecoming is streaming on Amazon Prime Video.

GoAheadQuoteMe



I became successful in WWE by always learning and evolving. I believe that the people around me are smarter than me. Same thing in movies. I never watch playback. I never give feedback. I take feedback.

WRESTLER JOHN CENA who has branched out into acting



Hosting, yes, I do like it because I feel very comfortable around a teleprompter... Also, I have a lot of energy, so it's nice to vomit that up on stage.

ACTRESS KRISTEN BELL

ST THE SUNDAY TIMES

Here's what you can look forward to reading this week in The Sunday Times

TRENDING IN 2019:
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Quick Sink Fact #1 – Condensation

This complaint is commonly referred to as "leaking" sink. Water droplet found under the sink is due to condensation. It happens when the air temperature inside the kitchen cabinet is warmer than the air outside. The greater the temperature difference, the higher risk of condensation. So, please do NOT defrost your frozen food in your sink. A classic example is to take out a can drink from the fridge and leave it on the table for 10 minutes. Your table will be wet due to condensation from the can drink.

*Solution: Do NOT defrost frozen food in your sink at all times. It is important to note that condensation can happen to all brands and types of sinks – even in granite sinks and stainless steel sinks with undercoat paint. Installing ventilation rings on cabinet doors will reduce condensation.

Quick Sink Fact #2 – "Rusty" Sink

Stainless steel does not rust – just like our knives, forks and spoons! When spots of rust are found on the sink's surface, this is the result of foreign iron particles (from renovation works - Example: drill dust) rusting on it. A classic example is the rusty paper clip mark at the top left corner of our insurance documents (kept in the cupboard for sometimes). We won't say that the paper is rusting as it would sound silly, right? ….. It is the iron paper clip (which is not stainless steel) rusting on the paper due to moisture in the air.

*Solution: First, wet the sink, apply CIF cream detergent and then polish the rusty spots away using a soft cloth (preferably orange color type for car wash). Remember to wet the sink thoroughly as water acts as a lubricant for the powdery CIF detergent. Do not use casual cloth as its rough texture will scratch the sink's surface. It is not effective to use a sponge as it is too soft.

These Bundles Are Available At All Bathroom Hardware Outlets in SG:

217 @ Kitchen & Bathroomware / AOS Bathroom / Asia Excel / Bath Labz / Bathzone / Bacera / Bravat Singapore / Best Hardware / Bathroom Warehouse / Bath Elements / Bathworld / DIY Bathroom / Daily Use / De Lluvia Bathroom / D'Posh / De'One / Eestilo De Vida / Elite Sanitary / Ezze Galleria / Econflo Systems / Everpros Marketing / Ellis Group / Elumen / Ferrara Asiapac / Hafary / Hupfarni Bathroom & Kitchen / Homeplus 2000 / Hua Chong Bathroom / Hosin Trading / Homewerkz / Homeone Euro / Heritage Bathroom / Home & Bathroom / Home Of Lights / Hong Soon Hardware / Hong Gee Trading / H&D Homeplus / Hemsley Holding / Haus Gallery / Inzwerkz / Kleen Bath / Joo Chiat Bathroom / Kian Shen Trading / Lavano Marketing / Living Phenomeon / Lookz / Lights & Bathroom Solutions / Luxury Bath & Lighting / L&H Bathroom / Lucky Khoon Bathroom Studio / Lifestyle Bath / Le Bath & Light / M-Flow Plumbing / Nueva Empire / Modern Lightings / One SG / PH Bathroom / Premium Outlet @ Boon Leat / Poh Joo Hardware / Poh Seng Hardware / Royal Sense / Sanigio / Sansei Singapura / Speed Lights / Tiong Yeong Hardware / Tuscani Tapware / Tai Tong Seng Trading / Teck Joo Hardware / Viva Nueva / Universal Union Enterprises / U-Home Hardware / Watertapz / W.Atelier.

*Note: Simply google these showrooms names to get their address & telephone numbers

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Did Madonna boost her butt?



Madonna performing with her son David Banda on guitar in a New Year's Eve performance.
PHOTO: PEREZ HILTON/INSTAGRAM

NEW YORK • Fans are hoping to get to the bottom of things, but Madonna is not telling just yet.

The superstar singer got netizens speculating about whether she had had buttock implants after she gave a surprise performance in a club in Greenwich Village, Manhattan on New Year's Eve.

The crowd was treated to Like A Prayer (1989) and Elvis Presley's Can't Help Falling In Love (1961), with Madonna backed by her 13-year-old son David Banda on guitar.

Photographs of her impromptu gig showed a more pronounced backside, suggesting that the 60-year-old could have had surgery, reported Fox News.

While some netizens defended her right to do anything, one person wrote: "I think the saddest ending to 2018 is finding out that Madonna got butt implants."

Following feedback, with some bringing up comparisons with singer Nicki Minaj, Madonna posted on Thursday, writing: "Desperately seeking no one's approval. And entitled to free agency over my body like everyone else.

"It's going to be an amazing year. #2019 #freedom#respect #nofear #nodiscrimination."

At the club, she had dared attendees to be brave. "In this new year, let's commit to disarming people with unexpected acts of kindness. Get outside your comfort zone.

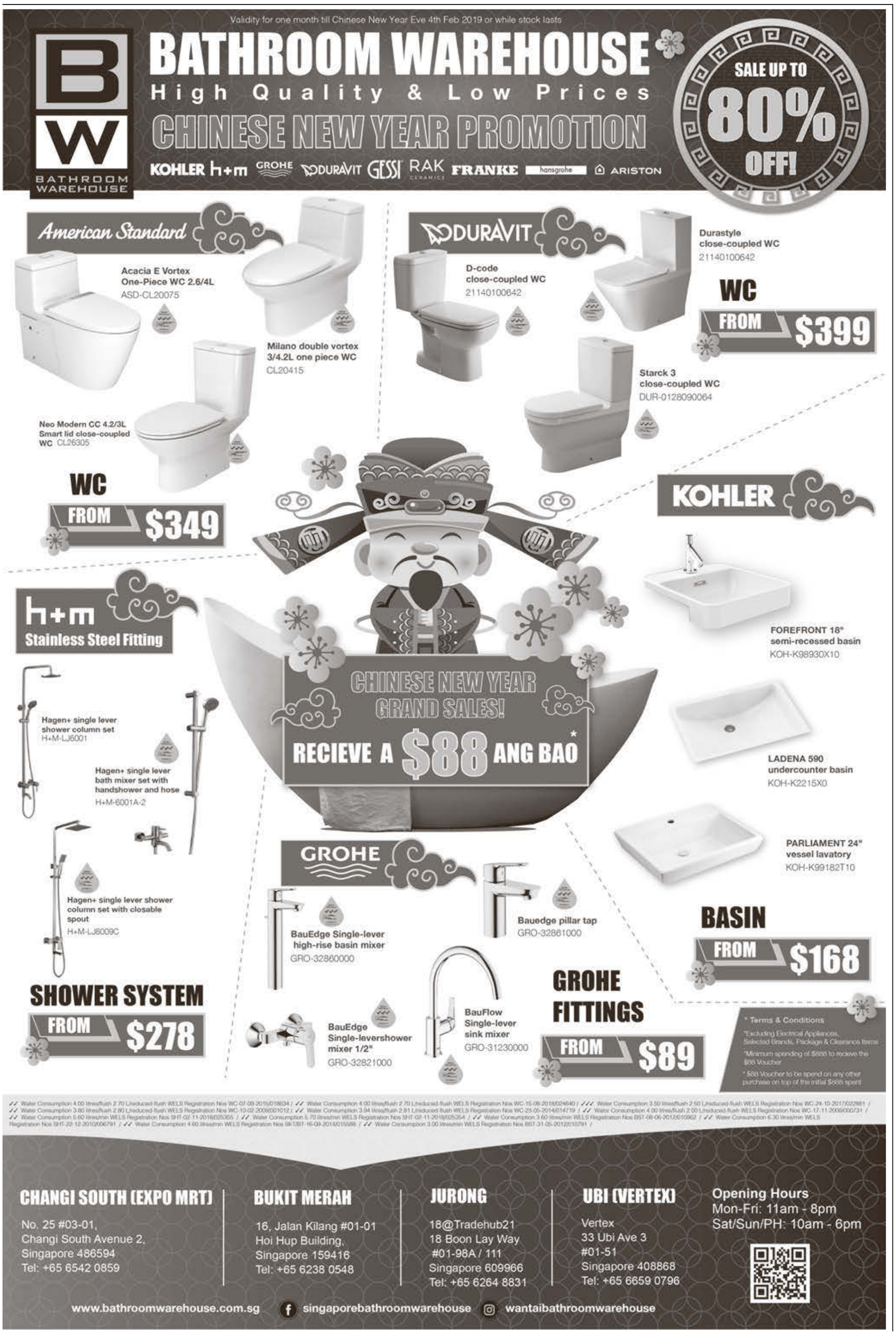
"Maybe we will find an opening to let the light come in. Let's close up the distance between one human being and another.

"Are you ready to do that?"

Going Ape over a video



Mona Lisa is a top draw but so is a music video by Beyonce and Jay-Z. Their video for the song Apes***, in which they perform in front of the painting, the Venus de Milo and other famous artworks in the Louvre museum in Paris, has been viewed nearly 150 million times on YouTube. It also helped the museum boost visitor numbers to a record 10.2 million last year, a Louvre spokesman said. The previous mark was 9.7 million visitors, in 2012.
PHOTO: BEYONCE/INSTAGRAM



Blackpink to play at Coachella

SEOUL • Blackpink are set to become the first South Korean girl group to feature in the prestigious Coachella festival in California.

The move shows the organisers' awareness of the big inroads South Korean and Latin acts have made in the American music scene, reported Billboard magazine.

Blackpink are prominently mentioned in publicity materials, with their name just beneath headliner Childish Gambino for the April 12 show that kicks off this year's event over two weekends in Indio.

The quartet, who have worked with British singer Dua Lipa, will also perform on April 19.

The Coachella line-up includes Japanese pop band Perfume and Latin artists J Balvin and Bad Bunny, but has no room for A-list rappers, a surprise omission given that the genre has entrenched itself on the charts. The other two headline acts are Ariana Grande and Tame Impala.

Blackpink will perform at the Singapore Indoor Stadium on Feb 15.

No wedding bells for Pan

TAIPEI • Are wedding bells ringing for Taiwanese pop singer Wilber Pan soon? That may be so, according to netizens who claimed yesterday that Pan's father, a university professor, told his students that Pan is marrying soon.

Pan, 38, was linked to a Shanghai air stewardess in April last year. However, he denied being in a relationship at that time and said work would always be his top priority.

Responding to the latest rumours, Pan told Apple Daily Taiwan: "Thanks, everyone, for your concern about my wedding. I am currently unmarried and no one is willing to marry me, haha. I have received everyone's concern and will continue to work hard."

Pan will be holding the Taipei stop of his Alpha world concert tour at the Taipei Arena on March 9.

Johnny Depp in troubled waters

LOS ANGELES • The last instalment of the Pirates Of The Caribbean franchise failed to storm the box-office. One problem was that Johnny Depp, who played Captain Jack Sparrow, reportedly received up to US$128 million (S$174 million) in Dead Men Tell No Tales (2017), Forbes noted.

The movie made US$245 million in the United States, according to Box Office Mojo. Now Disney wants to cut losses, dropping Depp from a planned reboot of the series.

Family-friendly Disney is reportedly tired of the bad press surrounding Depp, whose former business managers have revealed that he spent lavishly. Amber Heard, his former wife, had also accused him of domestic violence.

Meanwhile, Depp has filed a defamation lawsuit against British tabloid The Sun. It ran a story in April last year that had questioned why Harry Potter author J.K. Rowling had not stopped the casting of the "wife-beater Depp" in a Fantastic Beasts film.

Comics

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10.00 Euromaxx (Cul)
10.30 Arts 21 (Cul)
11.00 Worst Cooks In America 6 (HD) (PG) (IE)
PM
12.00 Everyday Gourmet 3 (HD) (IE)
12.30 Films & Stars (PG) (V)
1.00 America's Got Talent 12 (HD) (PG) (V)
3.00 In My Backyard (HD) (V)
4.00 Revolution (HD) (PG) (V)
5.00 Designer In The House 2 (HD) (V)
5.30 Divided (US) (HD) (PG) (V)
6.00 Chilli Hunter (HD) (V)
6.30 The Simpsons 29 (HD) (PG) (SC)
7.00 Cine On 5: Journey 2: The Mysterious Island (PG) (CC) (M)
9.00 News 5
9.30 The Strangest Weather On Earth 2 (HD) (CC) (IE)
10.00 Scary Scary Saturday: The Roommate (PG13) (M) (Premiere)
11.50 ONE Championship 2018/19: Destiny Of Champions (Kuala Lumpur) (PG13) (Sports)
AM
2.30 Timeless (HD) (PG) (D)
3.20 Worst Cooks In America 6 (HD) (PG) (IE)
4.20 Wheel Of Fortune 35 (HD) (V)
5.10 The Dr Oz Show 8 (HD) (IE)

CHANNEL 8

AM
6.00 Neighbourhood Chef 2 (HD) (V)
7.00 Portrait Of Home (D)
9.00 DreamCorps (HD) (S)
9.30 Firerobo (S)
10.00 The Adventures Of Little Carp (S)
10.30 All New Jackie Chan Adventures (S)
11.00 The Love 97.2 Breakfast Quartet 2 (CC) (V)
PM
12.00 Foodie Sunday (V)
1.00 Golden Age Talentime (CC) (V)
2.00 Challenge The Impossible 2 (V)
4.00 My Star Guide 13 (HD) (V)
4.30 If Only I Could... (PG) (CC) (D)
6.30 Singapore Today (News)
7.00 Spring Flower (PG) (CC) (D)
9.00 The Sheng Siong Show 24 (V)
10.00 News Tonight
10.30 Saturday Cinema: My Sassy Hubby (PG) (CC) (M)
AM
12.40 Seeds Of Life (PG) (CC) (D) (Finale)
2.40 Behind Every Job (IE)
3.40 The Ten Deadly Sins (PG13) (D)
4.10 The Deer And The Cauldron (HD) (PG) (D)

CHANNEL U

AM
10.00 Fantastic Baby 2 (V)
11.30 Shoot It 2 (IE)
PM
12.30 Blue Tick (PG) (CC) (D)
1.30 World Food (CC) (IE)
2.30 Artistic Journeys (IE)
3.00 Run Jang Mi (PG) (CC) (D)
5.00 Lady With Class (PG) (CC) (D)
7.00 Puzzle Masters (V)
9.00 Jealousy Incarnate (PG) (CC) (D)
11.00 News Tonight
11.30 Puzzle Masters (V)
AM
1.30 Lord Of Shanghai (PG) (CC) (D)
2.30 Close

CNA

AM
6.00 Singapore Tonight
7.00 News Now
7.30 Correspondents' Diary
8.00 News Now
8.30 Welcome 2 Taiwan: Taiwan Holiday (English Subtitles)
9.00 News Now
9.30 Asia Business First Weekend
10.02 Deciphering Indonesia With Cheryl Marella
11.00 News Now
11.30 Conversation With
PM
12.00 News Now
12.30 Asia Business First Weekend
1.02 Conversation With
1.30 Super Octogenarians
2.00 News Now
2.30 Welcome 2 Taiwan: Taiwan Holiday (English Subtitles)
3.00 News Now
3.30 Asia Business First Weekend
4.02 Deciphering Indonesia With Cheryl Marella
5.00 News Now
5.30 Edible Wild
6.00 News Now
6.30 Made In Singapore
7.02 Japan Hour (English Subtitles)
8.00 Primetime Asia
8.30 Correspondents' Diary
9.02 Enemy Within (CC)
10.00 Singapore Tonight
10.30 Money Mind
11.02 Japan Hour (English Subtitles)
AM
12.00 News Now
12.30 Conversation With
1.02 Correspondents' Diary
1.30 Money Mind
2.00 News Now
2.30 Asia Business First Weekend
3.02 Deciphering Indonesia With Cheryl Marella
4.00 News Now
4.30 Money Mind
5.02 Enemy Within
Programmes may be pre-empted by breaking news

VASANTHAM

PM
1.00 Vasantham Gold: Ratha Thilagam (PG) (M)
4.00 Bollywood Masti: Baadshaho (PG) (Hindi) (M)
7.00 Thirai Express (HD) (CC) (V)
8.00 Vera Level (HD) (CC) (IE)
8.30 Tamil Seithi (News)
9.00 Sa Re Ga Mae
9.30 Ha Ha Ha Sirippu 2016
10.00 Tamil Silver Screen: Thupparivalan (PG13) (CC) (M)
AM
1.00 Tamil Seithi (News) (R)
1.30 Close

OKTO

AM
7.00 Sid The Science Kid (P)
8.00 Elias: Rescue Team Adventures (HD) (P)
8.30 Super Wings (HD) (P)
9.00 Robocar Poli Fire Safety (S)
9.30 Metalions (C)
10.00 Pokemon The Series: Sun And Moon (S)
10.30 Smurfs (HD) (S)
11.00 Lego Ninjago – Sons Of Garmadon (C)
11.30 Sindbad & The 7 Galaxies (S)
PM
12.00 Totally Totto (HD) (S)
12.30 Fableicious (HD) (S)
1.00 Blazing Team: Masters Of Yo Kwon Do (HD) (S)
1.30 Nature Cat (HD) (S)
2.00 Zorro: The Chronicles (HD) (S)
2.30 The Deep (HD) (CC) (S)
3.00 Future Card Buddyfight X (HD) (CC) (C)
3.30 CardFight!! Vanguard G: Next (HD) (CC) (C)
4.00 Bear Grylls Survival School (HD) (S)
4.30 Blazing Team: Masters Of Yo Kwon Do (HD) (S)
5.00 Nature Cat (HD) (S)
5.30 Zorro: The Chronicles (HD) (S)
6.00 Word Whiz Or Slime Pit (S)
6.30 Don't Try This At Home (HD) (S)
7.00 The Deep (HD) (CC) (S)
7.30 Future Card Buddyfight X (HD) (CC) (C)
8.00 CardFight!! Vanguard G: Next (HD) (CC) (C)/**8.30** Bear Grylls Survival School (HD) (CC) (S)
9.00 Sportsmax (HD) (CC) (Sports)
9.30 Whacked Out Sports (PG) (V)
10.00 ONE Championship 2018/19: Hero's Dream (Yangon) (PG13) (Sports)
AM
12.20 Close

SURIA

PM
3.00 Ceria Popstar (V)
4.00 Tombiruo: Penunggu Rimba (PG) (CC) (M)
6.30 Girlfriends 2 (CC) (IE)
7.00 Travelesia (IE)
8.00 Berita (News)
8.30 Sepahtu Reunion Live 2 (CC) (V)
9.30 Setia Menunggumu (PG) (CC) (D) (Debut)
10.30 Extreme Roadtrip (IE)
11.00 Detik (PG) (CA)
11.30 Berita (News) (R)
AM
12.00 Close

C: Children; CA: Current Affairs; CC: Closed Captions; Cul: Culture; D: Drama; IE: Info-Ed; M: Movies; P: Preschool; PG: Parental Guidance; R: Repeat; S: Schoolkids; SC: Sitcom; V: Variety

Programme schedules correct at time of printing. Telecast details from Mediacorp, StarHub and Singtel TV. For pay TV updates, go to www.starhub.com/tv or www.singteltv.com.sg

StarHub TV

HISTORY (CHANNEL 401)

AM
6.40 Pawn Stars 19
7.05 Storage Wars: Texas 6
7.35 Detroit Steel
8.30 Pawn Stars 19
9.00 Navy Seals: America's Secret Warriors
10.50 Big Easy Motors
11.20 JFK Declassified: Tracking Oswald
PM
12.15 President Obama: In His Own Words
2.05 The Hunt For The Zodiac Killer
3.00 Genius
3.55 Storage Wars: Texas 6
4.25 The Pickers 10
5.20 Detroit Steel
6.15 Pawn Stars 18
6.40 Counting Cars 5
7.10 Monster Motor Challenge
8.05 The Curse Of Oak Island 5
9.00 History Drama: Vikings 5
9.55 The Pickers 13

LIFETIME (CHANNEL 514)

AM
6.00 Married At First Sight US 4
9.00 Married At First Sight Australia 4
PM
12.00 Born This Way 2
1.00 This Time Next Year
1.55 Bad Sister
3.30 Tiny House Of Terror
5.05 Gok's Fill Your House For Free
6.00 Married At First Sight US 4
9.00 Arranged 2/**10.00** Sister Cities
11.35 My Haunted House 3

HBO (CHANNEL 601)

AM
6.10 Bring It On: Worldwide #Cheersmack (NC16)
7.45 Leap Year
9.25 Phantom Thread
11.30 Transformers: The Last Knight (NC16)
PM
2.05 Pitch Perfect 3 (NC16)
3.35 The HBO Movie Show
4.00 My Little Pony: The Movie (2017)
5.40 Home Again
7.15 The Great Wall (NC16)
9.00 Darkest Hour
11.05 Pacific Rim: Uprising (NC16)

CINEMAX (CHANNEL 611)

AM
6.35 Superstar
7.55 The Leisure Class
9.20 Enemy At The Gates
11.25 Big Momma's House (NC16)
PM
1.05 Above The Law
2.45 Cellular
4.20 Arthur (2011)
6.10 The Game Plan
8.00 The Mexican
10.00 Repo Men (NC16)
11.50 Strike Back (M18)

HUB E CITY (CHANNEL 825)

AM
7.00 The Fei Ge Show (HD)
9.00 The King's Woman (HD)
11.00 Hot Door Night 15 (HD)
PM
1.00 Mr Player 7 (HD)
3.00 Unlimited Song Season (HD)
4.30 Travel Together 2 (HD)
5.00 Viva La Romance (HD)
7.00 Perfect Match 6 (HD)
8.45 Return (HD)
11.00 Happy Camp 2 (HD)

HUB SPORTS 1 (CHANNEL 201)

AM
7.00 Figure Skating: ISU Senior Grand Prix Finals 2018: Vancouver, Senior Pairs Free Skating
9.00 Multi Sport: Fise World Series Highlights 2018: Chengdu
10.00 Mubadala World Tennis Championship 2018 Day 3 3rd Place Match
PM
12.00 Mubadala World Tennis Championship 2018 Day 3 Finals
2.00 Extreme Sports: World Surf League 2018: Women's Hawaiian Pro Highlights
3.00 Tennis: 2018 Davis Cup By BNP Paribas Finals: France Vs Croatia Day 2 (Rubber 3)
7.30 Tennis: ATP 250 Tata Open Maharashtra 2019 Finals
9.30 Motorsports: Mitsubishi Motors Desafio Inca Peru
10.00 Multi Sport: Action Sports World 2018
11.00 Cycling: 2018 Saitama Criterium By Le Tour De France Highlights

HUB SPORTS 2 (CHANNEL 202)

AM
6.00 The Football Review
6.30 Golden Boy Boxing WBA Super Middleweight World Championship Canelo Alvarez Vs Rocky Fielding
7.30 Magazine: Omnisport.TV
8.00 National Basketball League 2018/19 – NBL Slam
8.30 National Basketball League Round 12 Adelaide 36ers Vs New Zealand Breakers
10.30 Football: The EFL Highlights 2018/19
11.00 Magazine: Omnisport.TV
11.30 National Basketball League Round 12 Illawarra Hawks Vs Sydney Kings (Live)
PM
1.30 Fiba World Basketball 2019
2.00 14th Fina World Swimming Championships (25m) Day 1 Highlights
3.00 Asean Basketball League 2018/19 Formosa Dreamers Vs CLS Knights Indonesia (Live)
5.00 Wrestling: WWE Bottomline (PG)
6.00 Magazine: Trans World Sport 2019
7.00 Other Sports: Ultra Pirineu 2018
7.30 Magazine: Omnisport.TV
8.00 Wrestling: WWE Afterburn (PG)
9.00 National Basketball League Round 12 Illawarra Hawks Vs Sydney Kings
11.00 Other Sports: Ultra Pirineu 2018
11.30 Magazine: Omnisport.TV

Singtel TV

CARTOON NETWORK (CHANNEL 226)

AM
6.00 Oggy & The Cockroaches
7.00 The Tom And Jerry Show
8.00 Teen Titans Go!
9.00 We Bare Bears
9.30 Craig Of The Creek
10.30 The Powerpuff Girls
11.00 OK K.O.! Let's Be Heroes
11.30 Ben 10
PM
12.00 Unikitty
12.30 The Amazing World Of Gumball
1.00 Craig Of The Creek
1.30 Running Man Animation
2.00 We Bare Bears
2.30 The Powerpuff Girls
3.00 Oggy & The Cockroaches
3.30 Supernoobs/**4.00** Ben 10
4.30 Cloudy With A Chance Of Meatballs
5.00 Teen Titans Go!
6.00 OK K.O.! Let's Be Heroes
6.30 Ben 10
7.00 Craig Of The Creek
8.00 Running Man Animation
9.00 Oggy & The Cockroaches
9.30 We Bare Bears
10.00 Regular Show
10.30 Steven Universe
11.00 Clarence/**11.30** Adventure Time
AM
12.00 Oggy & The Cockroaches
1.00 Supernoobs
2.00 Adventure Time
3.00 The Amazing World Of Gumball
4.00 We Bare Bears
5.00 Grizzy And The Lemmings

AXN (HD) (CHANNEL 304)

AM
6.00 The Amazing Race 30
7.40 Supernatural 14
8.25 Criminal Minds: Beyond Borders
10.00 Vantage Point
11.45 Team Ninja Warrior 2
PM
1.25 The Blacklist 6
2.15 Seal Team 2
3.10 The International (2009)
5.25 Criminal Minds: Beyond Borders
6.20 Caught On Camera With Nick Cannon 2/**7.15** Team Ninja Warrior 2
8.55 MacGyver 3
9.45 Hawaii Five-0 9
10.35 The Blacklist 6
11.25 MacGyver 3
AM
12.30 Supernatural 14
1.20 Criminal Minds: Beyond Borders
2.10 The Amazing Race 30
4.00 Caught On Camera With Nick Cannon 2/**5.00** MacGyver 3

WARNER TV (HD) (CHANNEL 306)

AM
6.00 Person Of Interest 4
6.50 Breaking The Magician's Code
7.35 The Big Bang Theory 12
8.00 Young Sheldon 2
8.25 Gotham 5
9.15 The Lord Of The Rings: The Return Of The King
PM
1.00 Troy
3.55 Green Lantern
6.00 The Dark Knight Rises
9.00 Harry Potter And The Deathly Hallows – Part 1
11.40 Rush Hour 3
AM
12.15 Friends 7
1.30 Deception
5.00 Supergirl 2

COMEDY CENTRAL ASIA (HD) (CHANNEL 324)

AM
6.00 Takeshi's Castle 4
7.15 Just For Laughs Gags 13
8.10 Mr Bean
9.10 Most Ridiculous
9.35 Billy On The Street 5
10.20 Most Ridiculous
11.10 The Muppets All-Star Comedy Gala
PM
12.25 Just For Laughs Gags 14
12.50 The Goldbergs 5
1.40 Hot In Cleveland 5
2.05 The Comedy Jam
2.30 Corporate
3.20 Detroiters
4.05 The Comedy Jam
4.30 The Goldbergs 5
5.20 Hot In Cleveland 5
5.45 Your Face Or Mine 3
6.35 Most Ridiculous
7.30 Jeff Ross Presents Roast Battle III
8.50 The Fuccons
9.00 Back To School Special
9.50 The Fuccons
10.00 Saturday Night Live 44
10.45 Funny As Hell 3
11.45 Jeff Ross Presents Roast Battle III
AM
1.00 Corporate
1.50 Detroiters
2.35 Hood Adjacent With James Davis

JIA LE (HD) (CHANNEL 502)

AM
6.00 Stylish Man
7.00 Super Nightclub
8.30 Top Singers
10.00 Breeze At The Love River
PM
12.00 Stylish Man
1.00 Super Nightclub
2.30 Breeze At The Love River
4.30 Top Singers
6.00 Stylish Man
7.00 Breeze At The Love River
9.00 The Legend Of Golden Music
10.00 Hua Hee Seko-Lah 5
10.30 The Golden Melodies 2018
AM
12.00 Stylish Man
1.00 Breeze At The Love River
3.00 The Legend Of Golden Music
4.00 Hua Hee Seko-Lah 5
4.30 The Golden Melodies 2018

TheStarsSay

Aries (March 21 - April 19)
Slow down. You have more going on than you realise. You may overlook something important.

Taurus (April 20 - May 20)
Gear up for a shift in perspective and to shake things up. Your great energy helps you make the most of it.

Gemini (May 21 - June 20)
You cannot get a grasp of what is going on unless you experiment and see how you can change things.

Cancer (June 21 - July 22)
People are having a harder time understanding you. You can almost certainly simplify to meet their needs.

Leo (July 23 - Aug 22)
Listen to what people are trying to tell you. Wait until you have heard it all before you act.

Virgo (Aug 23 - Sept 22)
Your ambition is healthy and your energy just right. Do not feel bad if you have to do it all yourself.

Libra (Sept 23 - Oct 22)
Your emotions are churning. Bow out of any major social obligations and work through your feelings.

Scorpio (Oct 23 - Nov 21)
Your willpower will determine your kind of day. If you can resist temptations, you can be quite productive.

Sagittarius (Nov 22 - Dec 21)
You need to think about the future. Make sure you are saving a bit of each pay cheque for that rainy day.

Capricorn (Dec 22 - Jan 19)
You score another big win in one way or another, but you need not worry about trying too hard.

Aquarius (Jan 20 - Feb 18)
If you struggle too hard, you will hurt yourself. Just chill out. A new perspective will help you figure it out.

Pisces (Feb 19 - March 20)
Someone you know and trust is in a position to help you. Do not be shy about asking for a favour.

• Provided by Astrology.com (www.astrology.com)

Radio

KISS92 (TODAY)

AM
6.00 Desiree Lai
PM
12.00 Charmaine Yee
8.00 Jill Lim

KISS92 (TOMORROW)

AM
6.00 American Top 40 With Ryan Seacrest
PM
12.00 Jill Lim

ONE FM 91.3 (TODAY)

AM
6.00 Cheryl Miles
PM
12.00 Harry Corro

ONE FM 91.3 (TOMORROW)

PM
12.00 Harry Corro

MONEY FM 89.3 (WEEKENDS)

AM
7.00 Weekend Mornings With Jason Dasey

Tides

SUN RISE/SET TIME: 7.09am/7.12pm
MOON RISE/SET TIME: 6.18am/6.38pm

TIDES TODAY: Singapore: 4.41am (1.7m), 10.18am (3m), 5.05pm (0.5m). Desaru: 4.39am (1.9m), 9.26am (2.5m), 4.24pm (0.8m), 11.54pm (2.8m). Port Dickson: 12.25am (0.4m), 6.18am (2.6m), 1.21pm (0.7m), 6.53pm (2.3m). Mersing: 4.55am (2.1m), 8.35am (2.4m), 3.38pm (1m), 11.09pm (3.2m).

TIDES TOMORROW: Singapore: 12.13am (2.8m), 5.13am (1.7m), 10.54am (3m), 5.35pm (0.5m). Desaru: 5.16am (1.9m), 10.01am (2.5m), 4.58pm (0.7m). Port Dickson: 1.02am (0.3m), 6.52am (2.6m), 1.53pm (0.6m), 7.28pm (2.4m). Mersing: 5.31am (2.1m), 9.22am (2.4m), 4.18pm (0.9m), 11.43pm (3.3m).

For updates and more details, call Meteorological Service Singapore, NEA, on 6542-7788 or go to www.nea.gov.sg

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$139.25 X 12MTHS

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• 4K Active HDR
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• NutriFresh Inverter
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580L
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• Digital Inverter Technology
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UP: $229
Limited sets only

EUROPACE 5-IN-1 EVAPORATIVE AIR COOLER FAN
ECO513Q
• Built-in Ionizer
• 10L Water Tank Capacity
SAVE $141
$188
UP: $329

DYSON PURE COOL PURIFYING FAN
TP04
• Removes 99.95% of 0.1 microns
• Intelligent Purification
• Connected Purification (Dyson Link App)
SAVE $301
$598
UP: $899
$49.83 X 12MTHS
Limited sets only

I.T. PRODUCTS

Pay Just $201.90 for a Modern PC
Lenovo MiiX 320 worth $469
Only available at Harvey Norman Millenia Walk Flagship Superstore on 5 & 6 Jan 2019. Limited to 30 sets, 1 set per customer

15.6" Full HD
EXCLUSIVE TO HARVEY NORMAN
SAVE $201
ASUS VIVOBOOK 15
X570ZD-E4242T
• AMD Ryzen R5-2500U 2.0GHz
• 8GB RAM, 256GB SSD
• NVIDIA GeForce GTX1050 4GB DDR5
$1197
UP: $1398
$99.75 X 12MTHS

14.0" Full HD
EXCLUSIVE TO HARVEY NORMAN
SAVE $365
LENOVO IDEAPAD
530S 81H1003QSG
• AMD Ryzen 7 2700U 2.20GHz
• 8GB RAM, 512GB SSD
• AMD Radeon RX Vega 10 Graphics
$1234
UP: $1599
$102.83 X 12MTHS

13.3" Full HD Touch Screen
EXCLUSIVE TO HARVEY NORMAN
SAVE $411
HP SPECTRE X360 CONVERTIBLE
13-AE083TU
• 8th Gen Intel Core i5-8250U 1.60GHz
• 8GB RAM, 512GB SSD
• Intel UHD Graphics
• HP Sure View Integrated Privacy Screen
While stocks last
$2088
UP: $2499
$174 X 12MTHS
FREE GIFT worth $100
$100 Takashimaya Voucher

NETGEAR ARLO PRO SMART SECURITY CAMERA SYSTEM WITH 4 CAMERAS
VMS4430
SAVE $311
FREE GIFT worth $89
Additional Battery
$888
UP: $1199
$74 X 12MTHS
While stocks last

SONOS BEAM + SONOS SUBWOOFER
• Create a home theatre system when you wirelessly connect a pair of rear speakers and a Sub
SAVE $99
$1749
UP: $1848
$145.75 X 12MTHS

SURE WIN SURE LUCKY

Scratch & Guaranteed Sure Win Ang Pow
5 Jan - 8 Feb 2019
up to $1,000 per Scratch Card

Spend $500 to $999	Spend $1000 to $2499	Spend $2500 and above
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WIN 1 Year FREE Electricity
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15 Lucky Winners

FREE Ang Pow Pack
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Harvey Norman MILLENIA WALK FLAGSHIP SUPERSTORE

Event Highlights 5th - 6th Jan 2019

PAY JUST $1 Lucky Draw
Draw time: 1pm, 3pm, 5pm & 7pm

Sonos One Speaker (worth $329)
Samsung Galaxy Tab S2 9.7" LTE (worth $468)
Asus Switch 3 Laptop (worth $798)
Philips 50" Smart UHD/4K LED Digital TV (worth $1299)

Spend a minimum of $100 in a single receipt, for a chance to pay just $1 for your favourite items!

Grab & SURE WIN
11am to 7pm

NewMoon Abalone (worth $43.80)
Logitec Festive Collection Gaming Bundle (worth $277)
Samsung Galaxy J6 Mobile Phone (worth $299)
Dyson Supersonic Hair Dryer (worth $599)

Spend a minimum of $100 in a single receipt, for a chance to get a Grab & Sure Win. While stocks last.

HUAT HUAT Activities

2pm to 6pm • Make your own Firecrackers
2pm • Kids' Entertainment
3.30pm, 4.30pm & 5.30pm • FREE Gold Coin Chocolates When you meet the God of Fortune
Sat, 4pm • Wu Shu & Bian Lian Performance
Sun, 4pm • Fengshui Talk

FURNITURE



RIO
Full Fabric 2-seater Sofa
$1199
Limited stocks

BEDDING



OVER 55% off
KING KOIL CELEBRATE CHICAGO
Queen Size Pocketed Spring Mattress
$1595
UP: $3798
$132.92 X 12MTHS

0% INTEREST FOR UP TO 48 MONTHS
on all major banks' credit cards. Terms and conditions apply.

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Come as a family or an individual to enjoy Group Buy Prices.

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Valid from 5 January to 8 February 2019



FREE New Moon Razor Clams
with a minimum spend of $999* in a single receipt
Limited to 1st 280 redemptions



FREE New Moon Abalone in Brine
with a minimum spend of $2500* and above in a single receipt
Limited to 1st 550 redemptions

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citi

HOME & SMALL APPLIANCES

BOSCH COOKING PACKAGE



HOOD DFS097A50B
- Slimline Telescopic
- 740m3/hr
- EcoSilende Drive

HOB PBD9351SG
- Gas Hob
- 3 Burners with up to 4.5kW Wok Burner
- Precise Flame Control

OVEN HBF114BR0K
- Stainless Steel
- 3D Hot Air up to 3 Levels Simultaneously
- 7 Heating Methods

SAVE $1522
$2555
UP: $4077
$212.92 X 12MTHS

BRANDT COOKING PACKAGE



HOOD BPI6230B
- Wall Mount Hood
- 1000m3/hr
- 3 Speed Control

HOB AD995XC2
- Induction Hob
- 2 Zone Cooking
- Touch Sensitive Control

OVEN BXC6537XS
- Catalytic
- Quattro Pulse
- Smart Assist

SAVE $1802
$2995
UP: $4797
$249.58 X 12MTHS



OVER 75% off
BRANDED COFFEE MAKER
$11
UP: $50
Limited sets only



SAVE $38
BRANDED OVEN
- 1380W
- Stainless Steel Heating Element

$48
UP: $86



SAVE $100
MORPHY RICHARDS TOASTER
240006 ASPECT
- Stainless steel finish
- 4 slice
- 7 setting browning control

$139
UP: $239



SAVE $70
SAMSUNG MICROWAVE
MC-28M6055CK/SP
- HotBlast™
- SLIM FRY™

$439
UP: $509



SAVE $136
EUROPACE CHEST FREEZER
EFZ6301T
- Electronic Temperature Control
- Front Water Disposal Outlet

$663
UP: $799
$55.25 X 12MTHS



FREE GIFT Stacking Kit
SAVE $702
ELECTROLUX DRYER
EDH3786GDW
- Heat Pump Technology with Sensor Dry
- Reverse Tumbling Technology

$1297
UP: $1999
$108.08 X 12MTHS



SAVE $600
LG DISHWASHER
DFB425FP
- 14 Place Setting
- Quadwash™
- TrueSteam™

$1699
UP: $2299
$141.58 X 12MTHS



SAVE $100
PHILIPS BAGLESS VACUUM
FC-9174/61
- Large 4-liter capacity
- Highly efficient 2200 Watt Motor Generates Max. 500 Watt Suction Power For Perfect Cleaning Results

$299
UP: $399
Limited sets only



SAVE $221
DYSON HANDSTICK VACUUM
V10 Fluffy
- 5x Floor tool
- Run time 60min
- Charge time 3.5Hr

$678
UP: $899
$56.50 X 12MTHS
Limited sets only



SAVE $208
KARCHER VACUUM CLEANER
DS6000 MEDICLEAN WATER FILTER
- Ensures fresher 99.99% Dust-free Exhaust Air
- Multi-stage Filter System
- It Can Cover all Hard Surfaces, Carpets, Textile Surfaces, Hallways and Covers

$780
UP: $988
$65 X 12MTHS
Limited sets only

AUDIO VISUAL



SAVE $2301
PHILIPS 55" SMART 4K / OLED TV
55OLED873
- Quad Core Processing
- Smart/ambilight 3
- Digital T2

$2698
UP: $4999
$224.83 X 12MTHS



SAVE $1750
SONY 55" ANDROID 4K TV
KD-55X9000E
- X1 HDR Processor
- Android Tv
- Digital T2

$2849
UP: $4599
$237.42 X 12MTHS

FREE GIFTS worth $580.80
$300 Pre-paid Master Card + 6 Months Singtel Cast Subscription + 2 Months Viu Premium Subscription



SAVE $800
SONY 70" ANDROID 4K TV
KD-70X8300F
- Supreme UHD Dimming
- Auto Depth Enhancer
- Dynamic Crystal Color

$4199
UP: $4999
$349.92 X 12MTHS



SAVE $720
SAMSUNG 75" SMART 4K ULTRA HD TV
UA-75NU7100KXXS
- HDR 10+
- Pur Color
- UHD Dimming
Limited sets only

$5279
UP: $5999
$439.92 X 12MTHS

CAMERAS



FREE GIFT worth $16 16GB SD Card
SAVE $54
FUJIFILM RUGGED CAMERA
FINEPIX XP120
- Fujinon 5x Optical Zoom Lens
- Water, Shock, Freeze, and Dustproof
- Full HD 1080p Video Recording at 60 fps
- Built-in Wi-Fi Connectivity

$295
UP: $349



FREE GIFTS worth $84 Floating Strap + Sport Holder
SAVE $30
OLYMPUS RUGGED CAMERA
TOUGH TG-5
- 4x Optical Zoom f/2 Lens
- Variable Macro System
- UHD 4K Video Recording
- Built-In Wi-Fi and GPS

$638
UP: $668
$53.17 X 12MTHS



FREE GIFTS worth $41 16GB SD Card + Bag
SAVE $250
SONY COMPACT SYSTEM CAMERA WITH 16-50MM LENS
A5100
- 3.0" Tilting Touchscreen LCD
- Full HD 1080p Video at 50Mbps
- Hybrid AF & 179 Phase-Detect Points
- Built-In Wi-Fi Connectivity with NFC

$749
UP: $999
$62.42 X 12MTHS
Price shown after cashback



FREE GIFTS worth $101 16GB SD Card + Bag + Extra Battery
SAVE $200
NIKON DIGITAL SLR CAMERA WITH 18-55MM LENS
D5600
- Full HD Video Recording at 60 fps
- Multi-CAM 39-Point AF Sensor
- Bluetooth and Wi-Fi with NFC
- Time-Lapse Movie Recording

$999
UP: $1199
$83.25 X 12MTHS
Price shown after cashback

I.T. PRODUCTS



SAVE $199
BRANDED NOTEBOOK
- 8th Gen Intel Core i5-8250U 1.60GHz
- 8GB RAM, 256GB SSD
- AMD Radeon 530 2GB DDR5

$950
UP: $1149
$79.17 X 12MTHS



SAVE $450
MICROSOFT SURFACE PRO
- Intel i5 Processor
- 8GB Ram, 256GB Storage
- Windows 10
- Up to 13.5 Hours of Video Playback

Type cover & pen sold separately

$1338
UP: $1788
$111.50 X 12MTHS



Picture for illustration

SAVE $333
BRANDED AIO DESKTOP
- 8th Gen Intel Core i7-8700T 2.40GHz
- 16GB RAM, 1TB HDD + 128GB SSD
- AMD Radeon 530 4GB DDR5

$1666
UP: $1999
$138.83 X 12MTHS



SAVE $70
BRANDED WIRELESS 4 IN 1 BUSINESS PRINTER
- Print, Scan, Copy, Fax
- Automatic Document Feeder, 2 Sided Print
- 1 Year Onsite Warranty

$199
UP: $269



xconnected fitness & health
SAVE $40
GARMIN VIVOFIT 4 BLACK
- Tracks Steps, Distance and Calories Burned, Monitors Sleep and Provides a Personalized Daily Step Goal
- Garmin Move IQ™ Feature Automatically Detects Activity and Classifies Activity Type On Garmin Connect

Limited to 10 sets per store

$89
UP: $129



SAVE $22
JAYBIRD TARAH SPORT WIRELESS HEADPHONE
- A crisp, clear and uncompromising soundtrack for your adventure, with fully adjustable EQ in the Jaybird app.

$123
UP: $145



SAVE $220
MARSHALL KILBURN BLUETOOTH SPEAKER
- With a Well-balanced Audio Which Boasts a Clear Midrange and Extended Highs for a Sound
- Built-in Battery Life Of Up to 20 Hours

$329
UP: $549



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SAVE $706
MSI GP63 LEOPARD 8RF
- 8th Gen Intel Core i7-8750H 2.20GHz
- 16GB RAM, 1TB HDD + 256GB SSD
- NVIDIA GeForce GTX1070 8GB DDR5

$2493
UP: $3199
$207.75 X 12MTHS

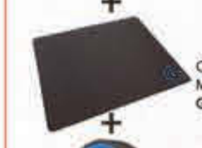


LOGITECH GAMING FESTIVE COLLECTION



Proteous Spectrum RGB Tunable Gaming Mouse G502

+



Cloth Gaming MousePad G240

+



Prodigy Gaming Headset G233

OVER 50% off
$129
UP: $277



SAVE $1107
ASUS ROG G20CI-SG007T
- Intel Core i7-7700 3.60GHz
- 32GB RAM, 2TB HDD + 256GB SSD
- NVIDIA GeForce GTX1080 8GB DDR5

$2191
UP: $3298
$182.58 X 12MTHS

While stocks last



SAVE $160
XBOX ONE X CONSOLE WITH 1 GAME
- Xbox One X 1TB Console
- 1 x Controller
- 1x Game title

$539
UP: $699
$44.92 X 12MTHS



SAVE $50
HTC VIVE VR PRO STARTER KIT
- HTC Vive Pro Headset
- Base Station 1.0, Controller 1.0 & Link Box 1.0

FREE GIFTS worth $278.90
USD $50 Steam Wallet Coupon, Fall Out 4 VR & Base Station Stand Set

While stocks last

$1849
UP: $1899
$154.08 X 12MTHS

0% INTEREST FOR UP TO 48 MONTHS
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B

HOME



LEE KIP LEE
EX-PRESIDENT OF PERANAKAN ASSOCIATION DIES OF KIDNEY CANCER **B6**



Twins Chong Wei Guan (at left) and Wei Kit are among the Singapore Sports School's top scorers. Wei Guan scored 43 points in the International Baccalaureate exam while Wei Kit scored 44 points, out of a maximum of 45. ST PHOTO: DESMOND FOO

Twins who just made it to Express score high in IB

Duo among top scorers at S'pore Sports School, where they learnt to juggle sports and studies

Nicole Chia

Six years ago, Chong Wei Kit and his twin brother Wei Guan enrolled in the Singapore Sports School (SSP) with Primary School Leaving Examination scores of 203 and 207 respectively, just about qualifying them for the Express course.

"PSLE was coming, but at the time, I didn't care about academics and I didn't study at all, I played a ton of computer games," Wei Kit, 18, told the media yesterday. "My mum got very angry, but during that time, I didn't want to listen to anyone, I just wanted to do things by myself. I just wanted to do sports."

His six-year education at SSP, however, was a life-changing experience. When the International Baccalaureate (IB) results were released yesterday, the boys were among the school's top students, with Wei Kit scoring 44 points and Wei Guan 43, out of a maximum score of 45.

Almost all the 2,152 students from Singapore – or 97.99 per cent – who took the exam last November passed, compared with the global

RACE TO EXCEL continued on B2

Over half of perfect scorers from S'pore

Jolene Ang

Students who sat the International Baccalaureate (IB) diploma exams in Singapore have performed better than their global counterparts.

According to the Switzerland-based IB Organisation that conducts the exams, Singapore produced 38 perfect scorers this year – more than half of the 68 worldwide.

And almost all the 2,152 students here – or 97.99 per cent – who took the exams last November passed, compared with the global rate of 68.73 per cent.

The average score in Singapore was also higher than the global average: 38.49 points against 28.58 points.

Students from eight schools – including Anglo-Chinese School (Independent), the School of the Arts Singapore (Sota), St Joseph's Institution and Hwa Chong International School (HCIS) – received their results yesterday.

There are another 17 institutions in Singapore that offer the IB diploma. Students from those schools sat the first round of exams in May last year.

At ACS(I), 357 of its 444 students obtained 40 points and above, with 268 scoring 42 to 45.

It did not release its number of perfect scorers who received the maximum score of 45. In 2017, it had 27 perfect scorers.

The school's average score was 41.5 points, which was slightly lower than the previous cohort's average score of 41.62.

At Sota, the 146-strong International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IBDP) cohort scored 39 points on average, with 72 of them obtaining a score of 40 and above – the school's best performance in the past five years.

Another 14 students from Sota did the IB Career-related Programme (IBCP), which requires students to take up four core subjects, two diploma subjects, and a career-related study.

HCIS' 135 students scored 36.1 points on average, with 35 obtaining 40 to 45 points. Three students scored 44, the school's top score this year.

Globally, 18,387 students took the exams last November and more than 180,000 exam papers were processed in 16 languages.

IB chief assessment officer Paula Wilcock congratulated students on receiving their results. "This day is the culmination of two years' dedication to their studies and is a significant milestone for students all over the globe," she said.

Dr Siva Kumari, IB director-general, added: "Your IB study has given you great breadth and depth of knowledge, the ability to think critically, and the opportunity to flourish intellectually, as well as emotionally, physically and ethically, not just in your next educational step but in life."

The IBDP is a two-year programme conducted at 25 institutions in Singapore. IB qualifications are recognised by universities across the globe.

jolenezl@sph.com.sg



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Spend $2500 & above Get 3 Scratch Card

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15 Lucky Winners $1,200 each

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BRANDED
65" SMART UHD / 4K LED TV
• DVB-T2
• Web Browser
• HDMI x 3, USB x 2 Input
SAVE $701
$2198
UP: $2899
$183.17 X 12MTHS

16MP
PANASONIC
COMPACT SYSTEM CAMERA WITH 12-32MM LENS
• 3.0" 180° Tilt Touchscreen
• UHD 4K Video Recording at 30fps
• Built-In Wi-Fi Connectivity
• Creative Filters; Auto Shutter Modes
SAVE $103
$746
UP: $849
$62.16 X 12MTHS
FREE GIFTS worth $223
16GB SD Card + Battery + Bag + $100 NTUC Voucher (redeem at Panasonic)

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OVER 60% off
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WAP28480SG
• EcoSilence Drive™
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• T-ionicglide Soleplate
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$118
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15.6" HD
EXCLUSIVE TO HARVEY NORMAN
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$1399
HP ENVY X360 CONVERTIBLE
13-AG0018AU
• AMD Ryzen 5 2500U 2.0GHz
• 8GB RAM, 256GB SSD
• AMD Radeon Vega 8 Graphics
UP: $1699
$116.58 X 12MTHS
FREE GIFT worth $99
1TB Portable Drive

ASUS
NOTEBOOK
X507MA-BR071T
• Intel Pentium Silver N5000 1.10GHz
• 4GB RAM, 256GB SSD
• Intel UHD Graphics
SAVE $50
$649
UP: $699
$54.08 X 12MTHS

PLANTRONICS
WIRELESS SPORT HEADPHONE
BACKBEAT FIT 305
• Comfortable All-day Wearing with Portable, Ultra-lightweight Design
• Sweatproof Coating by P2i and Ipx5-rated Water-resistant Protection
• Up to Six Hours of Wireless Listening on a Single Charge
SAVE $20
$89
UP: $109

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• Parkway Parade Superstore (PP) Level 1 Tel: 6702 6327 Level 2 Tel: 6346 4705
• Northpoint City Superstore (NP) Tel: 6702 5188
2 City Stores
• KINEX Tel: 6702 5220
• Suntec City (SC) Tel: 6332 2312
1 Factory Outlet
• Yishun Business Park (YBP) Tel: 6245 1516
6 Heartland Stores
• Bedok Point (BK) Tel: 6446 7218
• Bukit Panjang Plaza (BPP) Tel: 6767 1500
• Djitsun Mall (DM) Tel: 6554 5630
• Hougang Mall (HM) Tel: 6488 2305
• Jurong Point (JP) Tel: 6795 2135
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Check out HDB property agents' track records online

Prospective buyers and sellers can see data on past 2 years' deals on CEA website

Rachel Au-Yong
Housing Correspondent

Would-be buyers and sellers of Housing Board flats can now find out their property agent's track record online.

Yesterday, the Council for Estate Agencies (CEA) launched on its website an initiative that shows the HDB resale transactions completed by real estate agents in Singapore in the last two years.

Called the Property Agents' Transaction Records Initiative, it publishes information including when a flat changed hands, where it is located, and whether the agent represented the buyer or the seller.

"The additional information can provide people with a clearer understanding of the agent's experience, in terms of how active he has been in the last two years in closing HDB resale transactions and in which HDB towns, and whether he was acting for the buyer or the seller," said the CEA.

The records are only of transactions done in the past 24 months, so that people can see the agent's most recent deals. Older records are available at data.gov.sg

Previously, the CEA website had only information that confirms whether an agent is registered with the agency.

The new initiative is among the recommendations made in the Real Estate Industry Transformation Map in February last year. It can be found at: www.cea.gov.sg/public-register

Having verified records of their experience would help agents build and sustain consumer trust, said the CEA.

But prospective sellers were divided on the usefulness of the new addition.

Housewife Amy Soh, 56, who hopes to sell her Jurong East flat in the next six months, said: "My mailbox is always full of agents' fliers and this means only that they are good at promoting themselves, not that they are effective sellers. With the website, I can check if they are really that good."

Another potential seller, a 44-year-old tutor who wanted to be known only as Mrs Lim, said it would be "much more intuitive" to host the agents' records on the HDB website, so that users do not have to "flit from one site to another".

She added that some real estate agency websites give "much more details" than the CEA website.

ERA Realty key executive officer Eugene Lim said his firm's website FindPropertyAgent.sg, launched two years ago, lets people check what properties its 6,490 agents have handled, what training they have undergone, and what awards they have garnered. Some of its customers have also left reviews.

"With more information, the customer is better able to shortlist agents with the skills to serve his needs," he said.

But National University of Singapore real estate professor Sing Tien Foo said the CEA system gives "objective information" about real estate agents.

Having to maintain a frequently updated track record puts pressure on inactive agents, he said, while "giving customers the right idea about an agent's expertise according to housing type and location".

While it remains to be seen whether buyers will rely solely on past performance in selecting agents, Prof Sing felt "the CEA system is independent, transparent and fair, and will not have selection bias like some review portals".

The CEA plans to provide, by the end of this year, agents' history in renting out HDB flats as well as in selling private homes.

rachelay@sph.com.sg

Number of agents up for second straight year

The number of property agents here rose for the second year in a row, even as the industry continues to face challenges.

There were 29,146 agents as of Tuesday, 575 more than last year, according to the Council for Estate Agencies (CEA).

Despite the uptick – last year had seen 174 more agents than the year before – CEA director for policy and licensing Chia I-Ling said that the industry continues to face challenges, with rising consumer expectations and technological disruption.

The industry has to continue to transform itself and improve in terms of professionalism to remain relevant, she said.

While there are more registered agents, the number of agencies continued to dwindle. There were 1,229 licensed agencies as of Tuesday, 40 fewer than last year.

Observers have said a more sustainable number of active real estate agents would be around 15,000 to 20,000.

Chong Wei Guan (top) is a hurdler while Wei Kit is a high jumper. Wei Kit says their mother, who is a single parent, is a huge inspiration.
ST PHOTO: DESMOND FOO



Pushing each other to excel

FROM B1

rate of 68.73 per cent.

The average score of Singapore students was also higher than the global average: 38.49 points against 28.58 points, according to the Switzerland-based IB Organisation which conducts the exams.

The 27-strong IB cohort from SSP was its largest in four years, and the school has maintained a 40-point average over this period.

After he joined the Woodlands-based SSP, Wei Kit, a high jumper, realised that he could raise the bar and excel beyond just sports.

"I realised there were a lot of people who excelled in both sports and studies, but in primary school, my mindset was that if you excel in one, you cannot excel in the other," said Wei Kit, the captain of SSP's track and field academy.

"I was really inspired by all my athlete friends. Also, my mum, a single parent, is a huge inspiration; I just want to make her proud not only in sports, but also in academics, " he added.

Their mother, 48, is divorced and a senior manager in payroll.

While the brothers, who have a sister who is one year older, do not compete against each other on the track – Wei Guan, who is older by an hour, is a hurdler – the sibling rivalry is evident in the classroom.

"When my brother does well, I want to do better, and when I do better, he wants to do even better," said Wei Guan. "It really pushes me in studies and in sport, and I am where I am now because of him."

For example, he said he felt pressured by his brother to study hard, after seeing him "studying every day" for the past two years.

After the brothers crossed the proverbial finishing line together yesterday, Wei Kit was in disbelief when he found out his score, while Wei Guan was not the least surprised. The brothers' path will diverge now though.

Wei Guan, who holds the national Under-20 men's 110m hurdles record, has not decided on his future academic plans.

But he intends to continue pursuing competitive sports – he plans to compete at the Singapore Open Track and Field Championships in March before enlisting for national service the following month.

Wei Kit, who enlists today, will take a more laid-back approach to his sporting pursuits in university, where he plans to read medicine.

Ms Jenny Lim, senior general manager of SSP's track and field academy, described the Chong brothers as model students who are driven and hard-working.

"They are respectable, thoughtful and care a lot for their mother," said Ms Lim, who has known the duo since they were in Secondary 1. "We're sad to let them go but happy for them. I hope other students look up to them as role models."

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Little India gears up for Pongal festival



A display showing items significant to Pongal, a Tamil festival, at the Indian Heritage Centre. Pongal, which is celebrated in Singapore from Jan 15 to 17, is named after a traditional sweet pudding cooked with cow's milk. ST PHOTO: KUA CHEE SIONG

Over 800,000 visitors expected; activities to celebrate Tamil festival include food trail

Rahimah Rashith

Little India is expecting more than 800,000 people to visit and take part in various activities held in the area in celebration of Pongal, a Tamil festival.

The four-week-long activities surrounding the harvest festival, which is a three-day event, will start on Thursday next week, with a bull, three cows, two calves and two goats being paraded from Campbell Lane to Hastings Road.

At the destination, the animals will be housed temporarily for a Heritage Carnival from Jan 11 to 19.

The Pongal festival, celebrated in Singapore from Jan 15 to 17, is named after a traditional sweet pudding cooked with cow's milk.

About 5,000 puddings will be distributed to people on Jan 15 and 16 at Pongal Festival Village in Campbell Lane.

One of the activities is Little India Food Trail, which visitors can join to learn about the different types of Indian food and explore various food outlets.

"Pongal in Singapore has grown in a big way, with the celebration going on for more than a month. The visitorship for Pongal was more than 723,000 people last year," said Mr Rajakumar Chandra, chairman of the Little India Shopkeepers and Heritage Association (Lisha), the main organiser of the festivities.

Noting that Pongal is celebrated in the Tamil community here and all over the world as a harvest and thanksgiving festival, he added: "We have to be thankful for what we have received all these years from the growth of our Singapore economy and look forward to many more years of progress for Singapore."

Those who are interested in joining the food trail, workshops and other events may send an e-mail to events@lisha.org.sg

TIME OF THANKSGIVING

We have to be thankful for what we have received all these years from the growth of our Singapore economy and look forward to many more years of progress for Singapore.

MR RAJAKUMAR CHANDRA, chairman of the Little India Shopkeepers and Heritage Association, on Pongal, which is celebrated as a harvest and thanksgiving festival.

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Donate Christmas trees to Justin Beaver and his furry pals

Ng Huiwen

The trees will give some of the animals at the Zoo and River Safari an avenue to explore new and unfamiliar objects, just as they would naturally in the wild.

Christmas might be over, but your real pine or fir trees could still be useful, at least for Justin Beaver and his furry pals at the Singapore Zoo and River Safari.

The Wildlife Reserves Singapore (WRS) has appealed to the public to drop off their live Christmas trees at the Zoo's open-air carpark from 9am to 2pm today.

The trees will give some of the animals at the Zoo and River Safari an avenue to explore new and unfamiliar objects, just as they would naturally in the wild.

The WRS told The Straits Times yesterday that this process, called animal enrichment, helps boost the animals' well-being. The WRS often uses natural materials, such as leaves and branches from trees in its parks, for animal enrichment.

Several WRS employees shared the appeal for Christmas trees informally in the past week, including veteran zookeeper Kumaran Sesshe, who wrote a Facebook post last Saturday from the perspective of River Safari star Justin Beaver.

"Hi, I'm Justin Beaver! My animal friends and I at WRS are always looking for something to gnaw, scratch, sniff and play with," he wrote.

He added that those with "real, lush and green" Christmas trees to spare after the festive season could donate them to the WRS.

ST understands that this initiative started on a small scale in 2017 for Christmas, but keen interest online has helped to spread the word this time.

The WRS said that when its staff noticed that many people were disposing of their trees after Christmas, they felt that these trees, with their pine scents, would make good enrichment devices for the animals. This is because the trees are something that they are not usually exposed to in captivity, the spokesman added.

According to American non-profit organisation Beaver Institute, beavers chew on wood to help keep their teeth sharp and prevent them from growing too long.

This is because beavers, just like all rodents, have teeth that do not stop growing.

A hard orange enamel on the front side of their incisors and a softer white dentine on the back enable them to sharpen their teeth as they chew on wood.

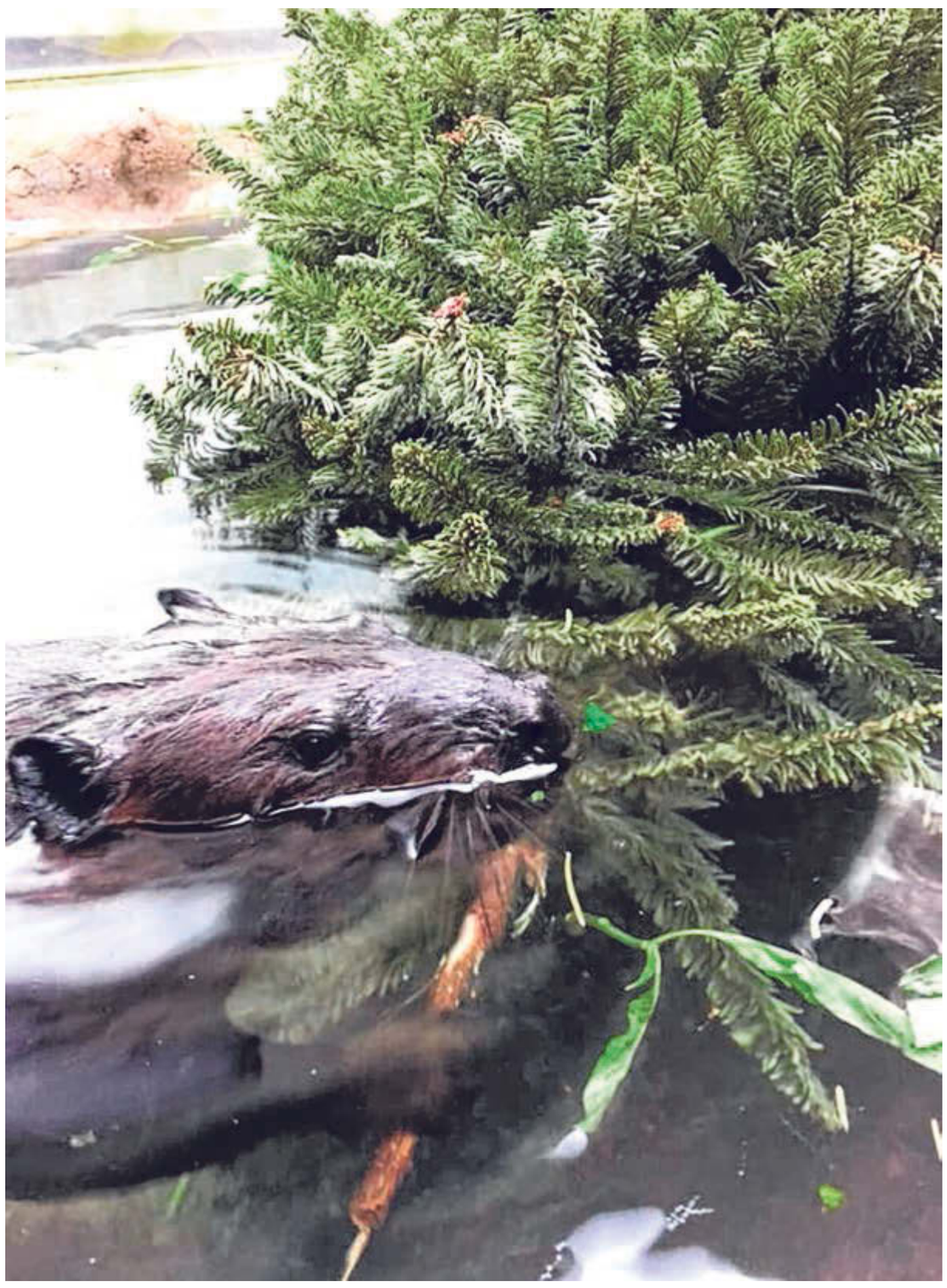
And as beavers chew, the softer part of their incisors tend to wear off faster, creating teeth with chisel-like cutting surfaces.

An ST report last month said that more people here are opting for a real Christmas tree in their homes. Nurseries noted an increase in sales in December, compared with past Christmases, which they attributed to more young families getting in on the tradition of buying a real tree. Some have also made the switch in a bid to reduce their carbon footprint.

According to the British environmental consultancy Carbon Trust, an artificial tree would need to be reused at least 10 times for its environmental impact to be lower than that of a real tree, which is used once.

How a fake tree is disposed of is also crucial. A 2m-tall real Christmas tree with no roots has a carbon footprint of 16kg carbon dioxide equivalent (CO_2e) if it ends up in landfill, said the organisation. But an artificial one of the same height will leave around 40kg CO_2e if discarded in the same way.

Some Facebook users have expressed interest in the WRS initiative, with a few suggesting they could arrange for a mover to transport the trees from their homes as a group.



Zookeeper Kumaran Sesshe, writing a post from the perspective of River Safari star Justin Beaver, said: "My animal friends and I at WRS are always looking for something to gnaw, scratch, sniff and play." PHOTO: KUMARAN SESSHE/FACEBOOK

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Pork imports from some areas in China suspended

Goh Yan Han

The Agri-Food and Veterinary Authority (AVA) has suspended the import of pork and pork products from areas in China with African swine fever outbreaks.

China has confirmed about 100 cases of African swine fever across 23 provinces since August last year, reported Reuters. Around 200,000 pigs on infected farms have been culled. Hundreds of thousands more in the vicinity of those farms have also been put down.

Only processed pork products from approved establishments in affected areas that have been heat-treated to inactivate the disease are allowed to be imported, said an AVA spokesman yesterday. At present, parts of China on the temporary ban list include Anhui, Fujian, Henan, Jiangsu, Jiangxi, Liaoning, Sichuan and Zhejiang provinces, and Shanghai.

The spokesman said: "While African swine fever is a highly virulent and contagious disease of pigs, it is not zoonotic (does not infect humans). However, the introduction of the virus to this region could have an impact on trade for countries in Asia."

Singapore imports 4 per cent of its total live, chilled frozen, processed and canned pork supply from China. Other countries that Singapore imports pork from include the United States, New Zealand, Australia and Canada, according to the AVA website. Hence, there is minimal impact on the supply of pork and pork products to Singapore, said AVA. It will continue to monitor developments and take further action if necessary.

African swine fever, which originated in Africa, does not affect humans but causes haemorrhagic fever in domesticated pigs and wild boar that is nearly always fatal. There is no antidote or vaccine.

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More listings, better matches on national job search portal soon

Employers may find it easier to identify suitable candidates when website is enhanced by June

Joanna Seow
Manpower Correspondent

Local job seekers will have access to more job posts when enhancements to national job search portal MyCareersFuture.sg are rolled out by June.

Meanwhile, employers may be able to save time in identifying suitable candidates.

Workforce Singapore (WSG), which runs the portal, said in a statement yesterday that it is testing technology that can recommend the most relevant job applicants to employers based on information in their resumes.

There are an average of 23,000 job posts on the site each month, and this will rise to more than 35,000 by June, said the statutory board.

This is because the portal will also display a selection of posts from global job site Indeed, which has signed an agreement with WSG. The job posts are by locally registered companies.

Those looking for jobs on Google, LinkedIn, JobsCentral and Jooble will now be able to see vacancies from MyCareersFuture.sg, which was launched last April to replace the interface of the existing Jobs Bank for users. The portal can prioritise search results according to the relevance of a job seeker's skills, to better match them to vacancies.

More than 500,000 people have visited the portal so far, WSG said in its first official update on the site.

On average, there are about 250,000 active users every month, said a WSG spokesman.

Of these, 43 per cent have used the skills-matching feature to look for jobs.

However, only a quarter of the users who are recommended jobs after using the skills-matching feature clicked through to view the job posts.

When asked to comment on this, the spokesman said salary and career aspirations may also play a part in decisions about which jobs to apply for.

He said WSG is unable to provide figures on placement rates as employers do not have to update them.

Employers cannot post on the portal yet, and must still use the existing Jobs Bank. Their posts are displayed on MyCareersFuture.sg.

WSG said it plans to launch the employer section of the newer portal by June, and will announce more details later.

Meanwhile, WSG is testing new technology to help employers.

For example, it is working with the Netherlands-based software company WCC to recommend to employers the most suitable candidates, including those who have indicated that they are open to receiving job offers but have not applied for a specific job advertised.

"This broadens their candidate list since they are not necessarily dependent on active job seekers who apply. They can now also approach the 'latent' job seekers," said WCC chief operating officer Jan Muchez.

WSG chief executive Tan Choon Shian said the agency hopes to collaborate with more partners to make MyCareersFuture.sg a one-stop job portal providing Singaporeans with trusted job-matching services and information.



Freelance writer Dennis Tan has applied for about 10 jobs in digital marketing in the last three months through MyCareersFuture.sg, but has yet to get a reply from the companies. ST PHOTO: ALPHONSUS CHERN

Mr Dennis Tan, 27, has applied for about 10 jobs in digital marketing in the last three months through MyCareersFuture.sg. These are jobs with at least a 70 per cent match based on the skills he listed – such as social media marketing and copywriting. He has yet to hear back from the companies.

The freelance writer, who is looking for a full-time job, said he picked up social media marketing skills while helping out at a friend's company, and wants to move into digital marketing as it is a growing field.

"As technology advances, I have to continually advance myself and learn new skills," he said.

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New portal to settle employment disputes

From Monday, people involved in employment disputes will be able to file their claims online instead of having to go to the State Courts. They may also be able to resolve their disputes on the go, through new online negotiation and mediation services.

These are part of the new Employment Claims Tribunals (ECT) online filing module, said the State Courts in a statement yesterday.

The ECT can hear both statutory and contractual salary-related claims for up to $20,000, or up to $30,000 if the dispute has gone through mediation assisted by the unions.

The new online services can be accessed through the Community Justice and Tribunals System (CJTS) with a SingPass or CorpPass. People not eligible for either of these can apply for a CJTS Pass.

Through the site, users can register settlement agreements, file dispute claims, submit documents, select a preferred court date and pay filing fees, for example.

Using the e-negotiation service, they can try to reach an amicable settlement without going to court. For example, when a settlement offer is made, the claimant will be notified to log on and consider the offer or make a counter offer.

If the parties agree to e-mediation, the ECT will schedule an online chat session with a court mediator.

The State Courts said the CJTS platform is secured and confidential.

If the parties are still unable to reach a settlement, the case will proceed to the case management and hearing stages of the employment claims process. Nearly 1,700 cases have been filed with the ECT since it opened on April 1 in 2017.

As of Nov 30 last year, 94 per cent had concluded, said the State Courts. Seven in 10 of the concluded cases were resolved at the case management conference stage, without the need for a full hearing.

The State Courts said three in 10 individuals who filed claims at the ECT were professionals, managers and executives. The top three types of claims were for non-payment or short-payment of salary or allowance (74 per cent), overtime payment (34 per cent) and salary in lieu of notice (31 per cent).

Joanna Seow





S'pore, UK launch partnership to forge broader, deeper ties

Digital economy, security and defence among areas that will see stronger collaboration

Rebecca Lynne Tan

As Singapore marks the Bicentennial of Sir Stamford Raffles' arrival and Britain begins a new era, both countries have started a partnership to broaden and deepen their ties in the years ahead.

The Singapore-United Kingdom Partnership for the Future was launched by Foreign Minister Vivian Balakrishnan and British Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt during Mr Hunt's two-day official visit which ends today.

The bilateral relationship "is as broad as it is deep", both ministers said in a joint statement that highlighted their countries' shared belief in free trade and international law, and their commitment to the rules-based multilateral system and to peace and prosperity in the Asia-Pacific.

The partnership will see both sides build on existing links and strengthen collaboration, especially in these four areas: the digital economy; sustainable business and innovation; security and defence; and education, culture and youth.

Yesterday, Mr Hunt called on Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong, and they reaffirmed the strong, growing and broad-based ties between Singapore and Britain.

PM Lee and British Prime Minister Theresa May had discussed the partnership when they met at the Commonwealth Summit last April.

In an interview with The Straits Times ahead of the launch of the partnership, Mr Hunt said Britain's relationship with Singapore and the region will be critical as it heads towards leaving the European Union.

"We think that Singapore has a leadership role in this region. We think that we have a huge amount in common with Singapore – we share a lot of values and not just our history. So, we think we should be partners," he added.

"We don't agree on absolutely everything, but this (Singapore) is, for me, a good example of a very successful country with which Britain has very longstanding links, and I think we need to burnish those links as we take our first steps in a post-Brexit world."

He also commended Singapore's economic model and long-term focus, as well as its education system and its far-sighted investments in economic infrastructure. These are areas Britain can learn from as it starts a new chapter of its economic history, he added.

Mr Hunt said he also hoped to strengthen ties and trade relations with Asean. "The economic dynamism of Asia, the innovation that is apparent here, the focus on skills, on infrastructure – is something that the UK can learn from," he added. Britain will open a new mission to Asean this year.

The British Parliament will resume debate on Mrs May's Brexit deal in the coming week, with a new vote on it the week after.

Asked about talk of his ambitions to take over from Mrs May, Mr Hunt referred to his earlier remarks, saying: "What I have said is on the record." Last month he had said that every MP has a corner of his heart that says he would like to have a crack at the top job. "I'm no different." But he stressed in the interview that he is now focused on supporting the PM through the Brexit process.

"We are in the final stages of a very tense and difficult negotiation with the EU and we've got a very tense and difficult vote to get through Parliament... I don't think it would help the situation and I think PM May is doing an outstanding job in a very, very difficult situation. I want her to succeed and I want to support her to do that."

He had said at a lecture on Wednesday that he did not support a second Brexit referendum, describing it as "incredibly damaging" and "not something that any government should willy-nilly wish on its people".

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British Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt, who is here on an official visit, called on Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong at the Istana yesterday. The two leaders reaffirmed the strong, growing and broad-based ties between Singapore and Britain.
PHOTO: MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION

Court rejects bid to get StreetSine to place $456k security for costs

K.C. Vijayan
Senior Law Correspondent

The High Court has rejected a bid by 23 defendants, including the Singapore Institute of Surveyors and Valuers (SISV), for info-tech firm StreetSine Singapore to place some $456,000 as security for costs before continuing its lawsuit against them.

The defendants had claimed they were entitled to security as there was "credible evidence" StreetSine would be unable to pay their costs if they won the case.

Assistant Registrar Zeslene Mao, who heard the application over two days in the High Court, was not convinced, based on the "current evidence" before her.

"While (StreetSine) may not be a commercial powerhouse with multi-million dollars in assets, it is nevertheless a company that has at its disposal substantial financial resources to satisfy any adverse costs orders made against it," she said in judgment grounds issued last week.

StreetSine is wholly owned by StreetSine Technology Group, which in turn is majority-owned by SPH Interactive. It is in the business of integrating big data sets with mobile applications to provide property information and transaction tools to the real estate market.

SISV is a national body representing professionals who carry out various services relating to the real estate and construction industry including valuations.

The 21 other defendants are either individual members or employees of SISV, while the 23rd defendant is Teho Property Consultants.

StreetSine is suing a total of 27 defendants, alleging that their wrongful acts and breaches have prevented the firm from marketing its valuation products to banks, financial institutions or the public in any meaningful manner in Singapore and abroad.

The first 22 defendants had sought $386,750 cost for security and Teho $70,000. Rajah & Tann lawyer Tng Sheng Rong, representing the 22 defendants, argued that StreetSine was both balance-sheet and cash-flow insolvent, based on an analysis of its financial statements. Lawyer Chia Huai Yuan from Dentons Rodyk & Davidson, representing Teho, added that StreetSine had not supported its claim that its investments in its business were discretionary and could be diverted to fund these legal proceedings.

StreetSine's lawyer Jaikanth Shankar from Drew & Napier countered that the defendants' arguments showed a flawed reading of its financial statements.

He said the issue to be decided under the Companies Act related to the company's liquidity, not profitability, and pointed out StreetSine had a high degree of liquidity, among other things.

Assistant Registrar Mao ruled that the focus was on a company's liquidity, based on the Act, and "in particular, its potential ability or inability to satisfy an adverse costs order." She made clear that the more pertinent issue was not whether the company was profitable, but if it could generate a positive cash flow from its operations and other activities to satisfy a costs order if required to do so. She noted that StreetSine had achieved a positive cash flow in 2017 which "is likely to be sustainable".

Assistant Registrar Mao added that StreetSine showed it could divert monies used for investment to fund its legal costs, if required. "All these militate against any reason to believe that StreetSine will be unable to pay the defendants' costs if ordered to do so in the future," she said in dismissing the application, while noting future applications can be made based on any new and relevant evidence.

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Peranakan Association's ex-chief Lee Kip Lee dies at 96

Theresa Tan
Senior Social Affairs Correspondent

Mr Lee Kip Lee, the former president of The Peranakan Association Singapore and father of singer-songwriter Dick Lee, has died of kidney cancer. He was 96.

The retired businessman died in hospital on Dec 29 last year and was cremated on Wednesday.

His son Peter told The Straits Times his father was diagnosed with kidney cancer in the middle of last year and his health had deteriorated sharply since November.

The 55-year-old independent scholar said of his father's final days: "He would sing along to the music we played for him and when he couldn't sing, he would tap on a tambourine. When he could barely whisper a word, we would pray with him. In the end, it was just prayers and songs." His father was a "staunch Catholic" who loved jazz as well as tunes like My Old Kentucky Home and Pack Up Your Troubles In Your Old Kit Bag.

The late Mr Lee's family and friends described him as a gentle, generous and quiet man who was supportive of his children's passions. He and his late wife, Elizabeth, had four sons and a daughter. Besides Dick and Peter, there is John, a vocal coach, and Andrew, a graphic designer. Their daughter, Patricia, died in a car accident in the 1980s.

Said Mr Peter Lee: "If you had any problem, my father would have all the time in the world for you. He was generous with his time and he always saw the best in people."

That he allowed his children to pursue their own interests could be because he never had the chance to fulfil his dream of becoming a journalist, said Mr Peter Lee, adding that his father joined the family's stevedoring business, Lee Chim Tuan company, out of duty.

The late Mr Lee's book Amber Sands – A Boyhood Memoir was about his growing up years in a seaside bungalow in the East Coast area. He was also a frequent contributor to The Straits Times Forum page, writing on his pet topics of Singapore history and heritage.

Mr Dick Lee, 62, Mr Lee's oldest son, said his father was disappointed when he did not join the family business but he eventually let him pursue his own interests.

When he released his album Life In The Lion City, in 1984, his father wrote him a letter to say how proud he was of him. "That letter freed me to become the person that I am. We all want our parents' acceptance," he added. In 2005, Mr Dick Lee received the Cultural Medallion, the nation's highest arts awards, for his achievements in music.

The late Mr Lee was president of The Peranakan Association Singapore from 1996 to 2010, a period that saw its membership triple, from a few hundred to more than 1,000, said Mr Colin Chee, 69, the association's current president. He also started a newsletter for the association which has evolved into a magazine called The Peranakan.

The late Mr Lee and his family are also among the Peranakan Museum's most important donors, said the museum's general manager John Teo. The donations included more than 650 rare textiles and kebayas and over 2,500 photographs, as well as jewellery, porcelain and furniture.

Singapore food expert Violet Oon, 69, would stay with the Lees on weekends when her parents were posted overseas for her father's work. Her late father and Mr Lee were good friends at Raffles College, where Mr Lee studied economics.

She said: "Uncle was a Renaissance man and deeply intellectual. He and aunty (his wife) were the most supportive parents you could have. Dick wouldn't be what he is if his parents were not totally behind what he wanted to do."

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Mr Lee Kip Lee and his sons (from left) Andrew, 52, Peter, 55, Dick, 62, and John, 57, on Christmas Eve. The retired businessman died of kidney cancer a few days later, on Dec 29.
PHOTO: COURTESY OF PETER LEE

FINAL DAYS

He would sing along to the music we played for him and when he couldn't sing, he would tap on a tambourine. When he could barely whisper a word, we would pray with him. In the end, it was just prayers and songs.

MR PETER LEE, 55, Mr Lee Kip Lee's third son, on his father's last days.

Volvo starts selling its China-made models here



It says move won't result in cost savings but will address capacity limitations in plants elsewhere

Christopher Tan
Senior Transport Correspondent

Volvo Cars has become the first non-Chinese brand to import China-made cars into Singapore.

Volvo's authorised agent Wearnes Automotive has begun selling made-in-China models – starting with the S90 flagship sedan and XC60 mid-sized crossover.

Its managing director (Volvo, Pre-Owned and Insurance) Sabrina Sng said the move, which will not result in cost savings, is to address capacity limitations in Volvo's Swedish and Belgian plants. She gave the assurance that the China-made cars are manufactured according to global quality standards.

"The car quality is great – no different than any in our range," she said, adding that "customers are mostly indifferent" to the move.

Volvo Cars is owned by Chinese carmaker Geely Holdings, which also owns Lotus and Proton.

The S90 is made in Volvo Cars' plant in Daqing, while the XC60 is from its factory in Chengdu.

The Swedish brand was the first Western carmaker to export a China-made premium model to the United States back in 2015.

In 2017, it began exporting S90s to Europe by rail from Daqing.

As the company expands, observers expect that it will have to diversify its production. In the first nine months of last year, Volvo sold 472,553 cars, up 14.3 per cent from the same period in 2017.

The new Volvo S60, for instance, will be imported from a new plant in Charleston, South Carolina.

Similarly, BMW announced last April that from 2020, it will start exporting the new iX3 crossover from its plant in Shenyang.

BMW Asia, however, said there is no plan "in the near future" to bring the iX3 to Singapore.



Authorised agent Wearnes Automotive has started with the S90 flagship sedan (above and left) and XC60 mid-sized crossover. Volvo Cars is owned by Chinese carmaker Geely Holdings, which also owns Lotus and Proton. ST PHOTOS: TOH YONG CHUAN

The car industry is not unique in tapping China's manufacturing prowess. Branded goods companies which have done so include Nike, Apple, Armani and Prada.

Said Nanyang Business School adjunct associate professor Zafar Momin: "I am fairly confident there would be no long-term impact on brand appeal of China-made Volvos. As an exporter of global car brands, China has been closing the quality gap with established car manufacturers.

"As China's manufacturing capability continues to mature, as it has since the 1990s, it becomes harder to establish the country of origin by simply examining the car quality.

"In the near term, there may be customers whose purchase decision may be biased against 'China-made cars' as it is a relatively new production source for passenger cars. But such sentiments will fade."

Loyal Volvo customer Benjamin Tan, 48, is not sure.

"It's a stigma attached to Volvo now that some models are manufactured in China. I would consider twice before buying one made from there, as I may suffer some resistance when trying to sell it off in future," said the civil servant.

Cars are not always made in their countries of origin. For instance, Toyota and Honda import models made in Thailand; BMW and Mercedes-Benz import some cars from South Africa and North America; and Volkswagen imports the Beetle from Mexico.

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Man who punched his former mother-in-law gets jail, caning

Shaffiq Alkhatib

A recalcitrant offender broke his former mother-in-law's nose after she refused to disclose the whereabouts of her daughter and granddaughter.

The 32-year-old man, who ran an event management company, was sentenced to three years' jail and six strokes of the cane yesterday. He was given an additional 55 days' jail for breaching a remission order.

The man had pleaded guilty on Monday to 10 charges for offences including causing grievous hurt as well as assaulting a taxi driver and a police officer.

The court heard that the man, who cannot be named due to a gag order to protect his daughter's identity, was sentenced to nine months' jail in 2015 for offences including assaulting a public servant, but was given an earlier release in August that year.

As part of his remission order, he was not supposed to commit any more offences between Aug 26 and Nov 24, 2015, but he breached the condition when he assaulted his former mother-in-law on Oct 1 that year.

He confronted her in a MacPherson flat at around 9pm that day, asking her for the whereabouts of his daughter and former wife.

When the 56-year-old refused to tell him, they got into a scuffle. He punched her in the face twice, causing a nasal bone fracture.

Separately, in 2017, the man assaulted a taxi driver who had gone after him for not paying the fare.

At around 1am on June 17 that year, the man boarded a taxi in an intoxicated state in Little India and later alighted without paying the $22 fare when he reached Saraca Terrace near Yio Chu Kang Road.

When cabby Chung Yuk Kee, 50, tried to stop him, he placed the older man in a headlock and slammed his face against a roadside metal railing three times.

Mr Chung, who managed to break free and call the police, was taken to Khoo Teck Puat Hospital where he had a wound over his right eyebrow stitched up.

In another incident about four months later, the man got into a quarrel with his fiancee at the void deck of a Serangoon North block of flats at around 6.40am and the police were alerted, said Deputy Public Prosecutor Lim Wei Yang.

Officers arrested the man after he refused to calm down.

He also refused to enter a police vehicle and kicked Inspector Elrick Han Wang Ting, 30, in the face, causing mild swelling and pain.

For causing grievous hurt to his former mother-in-law, the man could have been jailed for up to 10 years and fined or caned.

And for assaulting the police officer, he could have been jailed for up to seven years and fined or caned.

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FORUM

Chay's Take



Keep buying of electricity simple

It is odd that only 30 per cent of eligible consumers have switched from the current incumbent SP Group to the electricity retailers (1 in 3 eligible consumers switches to electricity retailer; Dec 30, 2018).

The Energy Market Authority (EMA) expects this take-up rate to stay the same as the roll-out stretches across the island.

For a scheme that is touted to reduce consumers' electricity bills, this surely cannot be right; one expects the take-up rate to be more than 50 per cent as a minimum. This could mean consumers either are indifferent, or cannot understand or see the purpose of the scheme.

A pertinent question is: What value do the 13 electricity retailers bring to the table, especially as they do not produce electricity and are also not responsible for the reliability and performance of the electricity supply?

With 13 retailers, it would be logical to conclude that operating, administration and marketing costs would actually increase and the burden is going to fall on the consumers.

In a liberalised market, certainly large organisations including the larger estates will seek group discount rates, resulting in multi-tier rates with the smaller estates or individuals paying top-tier rates.

Let's keep the buying of electricity, a non-differentiated and essential product, simple.

Consumers want a simple system without having to spend much time trying to search for the "best rate".

In this Internet age, I reckon what consumers want is real-time monitoring of their electricity usage. Perhaps EMA could look into the replacement of the electricity meters that have remained the same for ages.

With real-time metering, we eliminate the need for a person to read the meter and, more importantly, the massive data collected (down to the individual households) will be a treasure trove for economic and other applications.

Hoe Lye Soon

Raffles' arrival did not mark founding of modern S'pore

Mr Loke Hoe Kit raised two major aspects of Singapore's history that need addressing (Put spotlight on the 200 years of Singapore's modern development; Dec 31, 2018).

One of his points was that 1819 marked modern Singapore's founding. Actually, in keeping with the purpose of colonisation, Sir Stamford Raffles came not to improve our lives and undertake nation-building, but to promote British economic and political power in Asia. The colonial government ruled with that mission in mind.

Thus, as the focus was on the welfare of the colonialists, many locals remained poor throughout the colonial era, living in a Third World country full of slums.

The journey towards prosperity and a First World status began only in 1959, when the People's Action Party took over the government.

Clearly, then, Sir Stamford could not have been the founder of modern Singapore. I hope this fact finds a permanent place in our history books for posterity to replace long-held misconceptions.

The other point that Mr Loke raised was that features like a multiracial population and culture, and the rule of law and its institutions were absent in pre-1819 Singapore.

According to the book Singapore And The Silk Road Of The Sea by Dr John N. Miksic, ancient Singapore was a thriving city by 1350. Among other things, it boasted a sophisticated and complex society, and a multi-ethnic and multinational population living peacefully under the rule of a local chief.

Colonisation is long dead. We are an independent and sovereign nation. It is time to cut the colonial apron strings once and for all.

Anthony Oei

Offer help to prevent youth from remaining in poverty cycle

It is commendable that there is active discussion and debate on inequality and poverty in Singapore.

As a volunteer befriender with a programme that helps youth who dropped out of school, I would like to offer some observations and suggestions.

There are many families with multiple poverty-related issues, and these trap youth in a perpetual poverty cycle. For example, parents who are unemployed and illiterate may not know how and from whom to seek assistance.

Perhaps professional social workers could be proactively paired with such low-income families and youth, so as to prevent them from perpetuating the poverty cycle in the next generation.

Having volunteered at sessions where residents seek social assistance, I have also observed that the forms of assistance offered, like vouchers for food or transport, may sometimes be too specific.

More flexible forms of social support may be required to better assist multi-faceted issues.

For example, there are job-matching services that have offered help for the unemployed. However, some of these unemployed people have explained that they cannot afford the telephone bill and the transport fare to keep in touch with the companies and go for interviews, and are sometimes too shy to ask for help in these areas separately.

One possible solution could be to give them a CashCard that could be used for various basic services.

Understandably, the Government requires more fiscal space to implement policies to support the low-income.

Perhaps the authorities could consider increasing the tax rate for the high-income. The personal tax rate may have been kept low to attract high net-worth individuals to stay and invest in Singapore.

However, this need may be mitigated by other factors such as a stable living environment and competitive investment climate.

Raising such tax rates, beyond the potential rise in goods and services tax, would offer such fiscal space.

Social inequality can lead to disenchantment.

Enabling the young who are currently trapped in poverty cycles to reach their potential can contribute positively to the economy.

Lam Yin Yin (Ms)

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Post NSFs to work as ICA checkpoint officers

I believe that Home Affairs Minister K. Shanmugam's recent visit to Woodlands Checkpoint was a gesture of appreciation and a morale booster to the Immigration and Checkpoints Authority (ICA) officers working there (Checkpoint officers working their guts out: Shanmugam; Dec 28, 2018).

He also commented that ICA officers have been "working their guts out" and putting in long hours, and that they have to be alert because of the heightened security risks during peak travel periods.

If the minister could see the manpower and work problems that these officers have to contend with, I am surprised that ICA's manpower division has yet to take action to mitigate this problem.

Also, as the border control agency, ICA has a very important role to perform as the first line of defence in protecting Singapore against the entry of undesirable goods and people by land, sea and air.

Hence, I disagree with Mr Tan Soon Hock that ICA should hire retired and retrenched people as it is definitely not in Singapore's security interest to do so (Hire retired, retrenched people to boost ICA manpower; Dec 29, 2018).

A more feasible solution would be the use of full-time national servicemen (NSFs).

Currently, every NSF is deployed to a vocation based on his suitability, skills, interests and the operational requirements of the Singapore Armed Forces, the Singapore Civil Defence Force and the Singapore Police Force.

As ICA is part of the Ministry of Home Affairs, the ministry should post NSFs to the authority to work as checkpoint officers and beef up its manpower at the Woodlands and Tuas checkpoints.

This will tackle some of the manpower issues at the checkpoints.

Lionel De Souza

Was it 'freak accident' or neglect of duties?

I do not quite agree with the report (SBS Transit bus hit by pipe in freak accident, Jan 3).

The report stated that a loose PVC pipe, blown by the wind, crashed into and smashed the window of an SBS bus.

Increasingly, I notice a tendency to explain away incidents such as this as "freak" accidents.

Clearly the incident was caused by a loose PVC pipe which had been left about as a result of improper handling, transportation or stowage.

I believe that dismissing it as a "freak accident" absolves the people responsible for it and leads to condoning improper work standards. No accident should be labelled conclusively or merely as a "freak" accident if it stemmed from neglect of responsibility.

The media too should not report with an intent to placate readers that "freak" accidents happen. Such accidents are just not investigated thoroughly for want of the able or qualified.

Joe Tay

Wide range of factors used in picking of commanders

We refer to the letter by Mr John Lim Le Sheng (Don't sort army recruits by their education levels, Dec 31, 2018).

High performing full-time national servicemen (NSFs) are selected for command school from all intakes of NSFs.

Commander selection is based on a holistic and comprehensive system. Factors considered include cognitive ability, field assessments, peer and instructor appraisals, and medical and physical fitness.

While most commanders are selected during Basic Military Training (BMT), NSFs can also be considered for commander appointments after they have demonstrated exceptional performance in their units. Those who qualify include NSFs from a variety of educational backgrounds and vocations.

In 2018, the SAF introduced the One-BMT programme, which enlists NSFs from different educational backgrounds into the same unit.

Servicemen in the programme go through a common National Service (NS) training experience and stay together as a unit throughout their NS journey.

The NS experience provides developmental opportunities to all NSFs. Leadership traits that Mr Lim mentioned such as responsibility for others, resilience, and courage to make difficult decisions, are developed in each soldier regardless of their background, rank and appointment.

Team-based activities inculcate values such as teamwork and care for fellow soldiers.

NSFs also often take on leadership roles even as non-commanders, such as leading innovation projects or organising unit events, giving them valuable leadership experience.

We thank Mr Lim and other fellow Singaporeans for their strong support and commitment to NS.

Lee Chung Wei
Director Manpower
Ministry of Defence

Grab is part of new technology – embrace it

I disagree with Mr Jui Hang Teo, who said that instead of complaining about Grab delays, commuters should take a taxi, which is a "good old reliable and trusted method" (Grab system down? Just grab a cab; Dec 21, 2018).

He also implied that taxis are cheaper as he did not have "any surge pricing or additional booking fees to pay".

According to research conducted by iPrice Group, taking a Grab car is far cheaper than taking a taxi. For a 5km distance, the average Grab fare is US$4.30 (S$6) while that for a taxi is US$7.

Therefore, taxis are not always cheaper than taking Grab.

As a society, we must adapt to changes and move forward. Taxis may be the "good old" method of transport, but we should also be willing to embrace new technology, like Grab.

Terence Teo Li Yang

FORUM ONLINE

LETTER OF THE WEEK:
Go online to see this week's pick.

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What changes can be made to our education system to ensure that students accept failure?

It's not about accepting failure, students should instead be taught how to react to failure. It's how you react to adversity that truly defines you, everyone fails at something at some point.

Lionel Nicholas Ong

Every mistake is a better learning experience than any achievement, yet we only seem to celebrate the latter.

Shannon Knight

Emotional quotient (EQ) is essential to life. Schools should spend more time and effort developing EQ in their students. Discuss various life issues with students, and facilitate but do not direct such discussions.

Loh Wai Poon

The system is flawed, schools and even classes are ranked, which leaves no space for students and parents to breathe. Do away with rankings, and allocate schools by distance rather than cut-off points.

Sarbjit Kaur Gill

Scoot needs to take serious look at crisis management method

Communication and compassion are key when there are extensive flight delays.

As one of the passengers on the delayed Scoot flight that returned to Singapore two days later than expected, I would like to make some suggestions on how Scoot could have better managed the delay (Scoot passengers back in S'pore 2 days after delay in Taipei; Jan 2).

Just compare how Scoot handled this situation with how Singapore Airlines (SIA) handled multiple delays on its outbound flight to Manila last August. There are stark differences between the two.

- Airlines should always provide frequent and clear updates to all passengers.

In Taipei, Scoot did not adhere to briefing timings, leading passengers to crowd around ground staff for information. On both days, passengers had to ask staff questions individually and circulate information among themselves.

On the contrary, SIA delivered clear and frequent updates.

- Airlines should offer support to secure accommodation for passengers.

In Taipei, Scoot made an announcement that it will reimburse passengers for their accommodation bookings, excluding suites. No further support was given to passengers.

SIA, on the other hand, provided one-on-one instructions to passengers regarding their accommodation during the delay.

- Small snacks should be provided.

While Scoot issued multiple meal vouchers, given that only two food outlets were nearest to the boarding gate, there were snaking queues and often, food was sold out.

SIA served sandwiches, muffins and drinks at the boarding gate.

- Airlines should provide timely follow-up reimbursement and insurance claim information.

Scoot provided a letter for insurance claims for the first re-timed flight upon check-in, but not for the second re-timed flight.

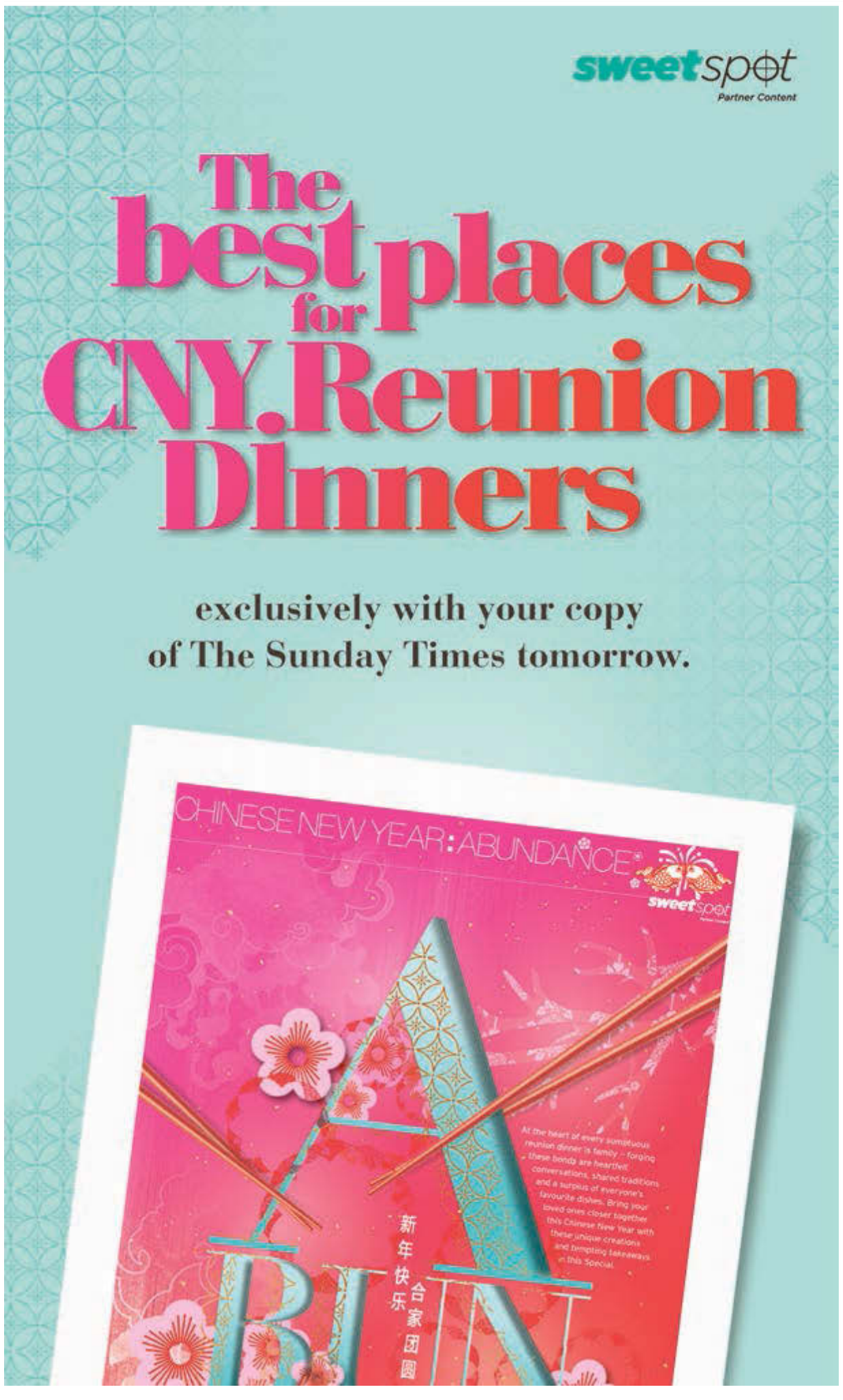
Upon disembarkation in Singapore, passengers were given a letter on instructions for reimbursement claims. However, the letter simply directed passengers to Scoot's Facebook page or online contact form, which are both too generic to ensure timely responses.

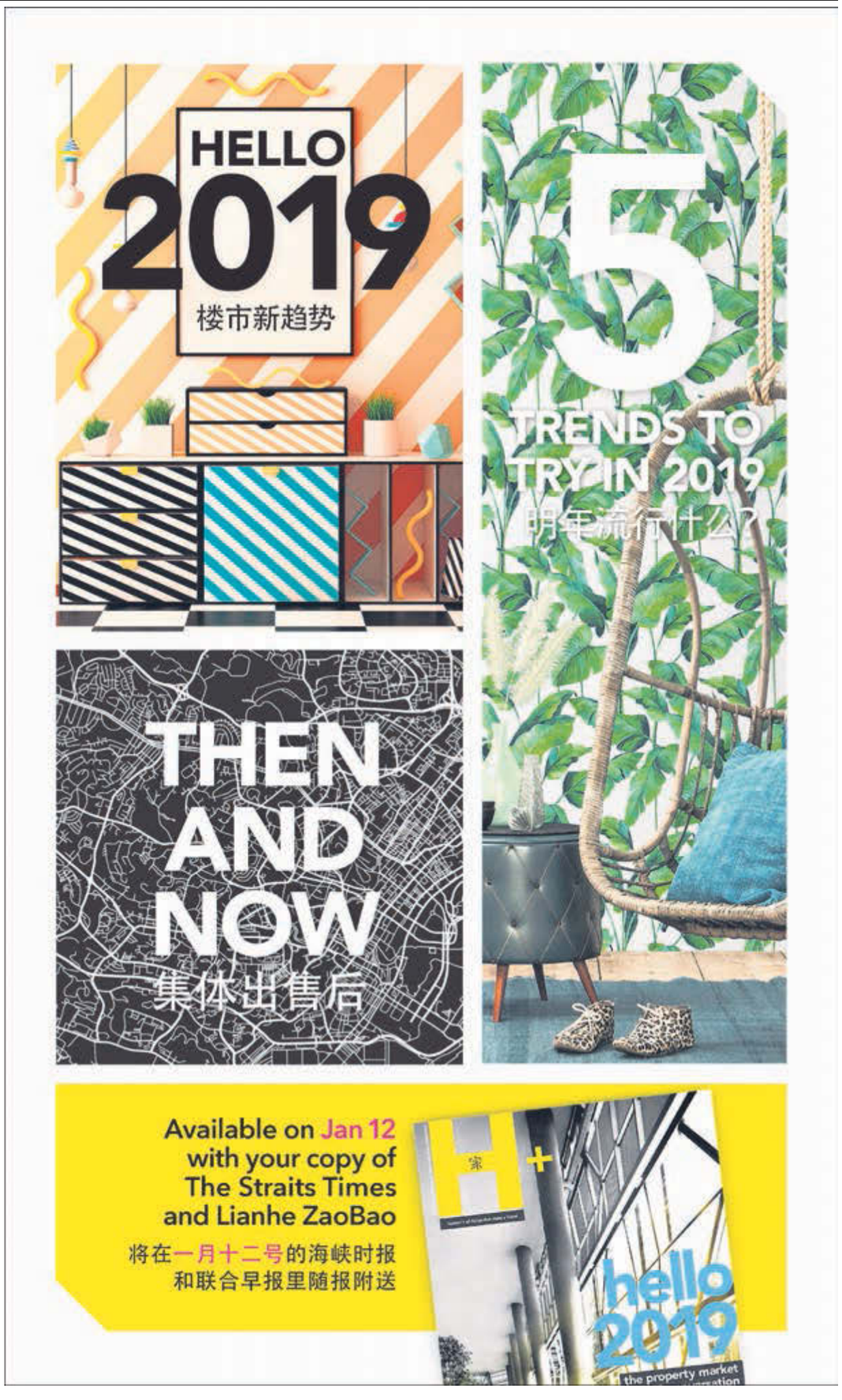
Last year, SIA handed out a flight delay survey to all passengers.

I understand that safety is of utmost importance to Scoot, and I commend the pilots' thorough checks and insistence on not taking off on a faulty aircraft.

However, Scoot needs to re-evaluate its crisis management procedures.

Stacy Wong (Ms)





PICTURE THIS



ST PHOTO: WAN SENG YIP

Game to learn

New teaching approaches being tried out at Heng A Khe Bong School in Toa Payoh in 1975, in which students learn through a game-like method. The school was an amalgamation of two Chinese primary schools, and closed in 1993.

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More foreign REITs likely to list in Singapore this year



Photos: iStock

By LYNETTE TAN

Singapore's equity market could see more real estate investment trust (Reit) listings in 2019 as foreign listing interest picks up, in tandem with investors' shift to safer havens, said investment bank Credit Suisse.

Mr Tan Kuan Ern, Credit Suisse's head of Singapore coverage, investment banking and capital markets, said the number of reverse enquiries from foreign sponsors looking to list US or European assets in Singapore has jumped to the most he has seen in the last five years, "to the point that we now have to be a bit selective as to what we think will really sell, and what we think investors will want".

Mr Tan believed sponsors' branding and level of name recognition will be important in appealing to investors, who currently have a menu of 42 locally listed Reits and property trusts to choose from. In particular, foreign sponsors who partner well-known local entities can do better, he said, citing the example of Keppel-KBS US Reit.

Traditionally perceived as safer haven assets, Reits saw a net inflow of $28.1 million from institutional investors in November, after two consecutive months of net outflows, going by Singapore Exchange data.

In addition, collectively, they have an average indicative dividend yield of 6.7 per cent, according to the SGX data.

Credit Suisse is also positive on the local tech sector, in an otherwise lacklustre equity capital market that will continue to see tight windows for deal making next year, as global markets remain volatile.

Mr Tan said: "There's a lot of promise in the tech space which is fast growing and a real hotbed of activity that I haven't seen in many other places. Finding the next generation (of entrepreneurs) is a big focus for us because we want to back them to take their business to the next level."

Bonds – both US and Singapore dollar denominated – will also continue to see appetite from investors next year, though preference has shifted to investment-grade credit, given the current flight to safety.

According to Mr Tan, the market no longer wants high-yield credit to come through: "Even if you're paying 8-9 per cent, at least from a Singapore perspective, everyone will prefer to take a high-quality credit paying 4 per cent than a low-quality credit paying 8-9 per cent."

This is an excerpt of an article that appeared in The Business Times on Dec 28, 2018.

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12 JAN — **Career Preview for Registered Nurses (Degree)** 8.30am – 12pm (Attendees to be seated by 9am sharp),
Clinical Research Centre (CRC) Auditorium (Level 1), 10 Medical Drive, Block MD 11, Clinical Research Centre, Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine, National University of Singapore, Singapore 117597
Join us at the career preview to find out more about the programmes, course structure and talk to participating sponsoring companies and hear first-hand on what it takes to be to be a nurse under the Professional Conversion Programme for Registered Nurses (Degree)!

19 JAN — **Career Advisory and Networking Session** 10am – 1pm, AECES @ Commonwealth, One Commonwealth,
1 Commonwealth Lane, #03-28, Singapore 149544
Thinking of joining the Early Childhood Care and Education sector? Speak to Preschool Teachers and Centre Leaders to learn more about the work and expectations of the Early Childhood profession.
Participating Employer:
NTUC First Campus Co-Operative Ltd Register via: *http://bit.ly/eccesfa*

21 JAN — **Careers with Far East Organisation** 12pm – 4pm, Lifelong Learning Institute, Level 3, LLibrary
Interested in a career with Far East Organisation? Come join us for on-the-spot interviews. There will be over 130 operations and executive roles available in the various business functions such as Hotel, F&B, IT, Finance, Sales, Leasing and Operations.
Positions Available:
Application Solutions Manager • Assistant Manager, Finance (Account Payable) • Guest Service Assistant – Concierge • Reservations Sales Executive • Restaurant Manager • Sous Chef Register via: *bit.ly/feojobs*

24 JAN — **Careers with ComfortDelgro** 9.30am – 2pm, Lifelong Learning Institute, 11 Eunos Rd 8, Singapore 408601, EH 1-1 & 1-2
Interested to join the transport sector? Meet employers for onsite interviews and find out more about the job requirements.
Participating Employers:
ComfortDelgro Driving Centre • ComfortDelgro Engineering • ComfortDelgro Taxi • SBS Transit (Bus) • SBS Transit (HQ) • SBS Transit (Rail) • SETSCO Services Pte Ltd • VICOM Ltd
Positions Available:
Assistant Station Manager • Bus Captain • Customer Service Officer • Driving Instructor • Engineer (Facilities Management) • Engineer (Systems) • Technical Officer • Traffic Controller and *many more!* Register via: *bit.ly/cdgjobs*

WALK-IN INTERVIEWS

15 JAN — **Healthcare and Hotel Sectors**
1pm – 4pm
WSG Careers Connect (Our Tampines Hub)
1 Tampines Walk, #04-32, Singapore 528523
Participating Companies:
Global Premium Hotels Limited • UEMS Solutions Pte Ltd
Positions Available:
Admin Assistant (Temp) • Building Technician • Cleaner • Healthcare Housekeeper • Healthcare Porter • Hotel Front Desk Executive • Housekeeping Supervisor • IT Executive (Infrastructure) • Painter • Room Steward / Chambermaid

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http://bit.ly/WSGmailinglist

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Bringing Career Matching Services to You
Bringing customised career advisory and coaching to the heartlands! Residents can explore jobs in their community, attend job search workshops and receive career coaching onsite.
Date: 5 – 6 Jan 2019
Time: 10.30am – 7pm
Venue: 112 Katong, East Coast Rd, Singapore 428802
http://bit.ly/wsgcareercoach

WORKSHOPS

11 JAN — **Networking and Business Etiquette**
9am – 5pm
CreditSavvy
10 Anson Road, #28-15, International Plaza, Singapore 079903
Understand the benefits of making a good impression in any social situation. Participants will get to work on their 'hardware' (outward appearance), 'heartware' (business etiquette and social norms), and 'software' (interpersonal skills in social settings).

12 JAN — **Create A Good First Impression at Your Interview**
9am – 5pm
HCS (Paya Lebar Square)
Paya Lebar 60, Paya Lebar Road, #13-18,
Paya Lebar Square, Singapore 409051
Gain better self-awareness to increase your confidence level and wow your employer with the right mix of responses in your job interviews.

17 JAN — **Building Connections at Work**
9am – 5pm
TRN Centre
10 Anson Road, #19-14, International Plaza, Singapore 079903
Understand the different communication styles and learn to build positive and authentic relationships with internal and external customers.

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Wsg Workforce Singapore

Information correct at time of print.



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Do you desire to nurture the young?

If you are a professional who's passionate about inspiring and moulding the young, ***JOIN US!*** Be part of the team that finds fulfilment in nurturing young children and walking beside them, helping them grow and learn!

WALK-IN INTERVIEW

Friday, 11 January 2019 – 9am to 5pm

1) **PCF Sparkletots Preschool @ Punggol North**
– Nearest LRT: Oasis
50 Edgefield Plains S(828717)

2) **PCF Sparkletots Preschool @ Sembawang**
– Nearest MRT: Admiralty
Blk 789 Woodlands Avenue 6 #01-633 S(730789)

Positions Available
- Centre Principal
- Preschool Teacher
- Infant Educarer
- Cook & Cleaner

Saturday, 12 January 2019 – 9am to 12pm

1) **PCF Sparkletots Preschool @ Braddell Heights** – *Nearest MRT: Serangoon*
Blk 417 Serangoon Central #01-456 S(550417)

2) **PCF Sparkletots Preschool @ Bukit Timah** – *Nearest MRT: Clementi*
Blk 319 Clementi Avenue 4 #01-55 S(120319)

3) **PCF Sparkletots Preschool @ Cashew** – *Nearest MRT: Bukit Panjang*
No. 17 Petir Road, Hillion Mall #02-33 S(678278)

4) **PCF Sparkletots Preschool @ Sengkang West** – *Nearest LRT: Fernvale*
Blk 436D Fernvale Road #01-156 S(794436)

5) **PCF Sparkletots Preschool @ Tampines West** – *Nearest MRT: Tampines*
Blk 151 Tampines Street 12 #01-26 S(521151)

Interested candidates, please RSVP the following details to **hr.recruit@pcf.org.sg**
* Position interested in * Preferred interview location (as indicated above)
You may also contact us at **6244 4600** from **Monday - Friday**
(except Public Holidays & eve of Public Holidays)
or e-mail your resume to us.

RAFFLES HOTEL SINGAPORE CAREER SPECIAL

This special feature is also available @ www.stjobs.sg/explore-careers

With arms wide open

Raffles Hotel Singapore is working with agencies to hire more locals and create an inclusive workforce as it prepares to re-open after restoration works

BY MEREDITH WOO

It has been almost 13 months since the iconic Raffles Hotel Singapore shut its doors for restoration works. But behind the hoarding and scaffolding, the people managing the 132-year-old historical landmark are not sitting still.

In addition to gearing up for the hotel's grand re-opening in the middle of this year, the management team is investing in its colleagues and working with agencies to form an inclusive workforce.

One of the key priorities now is to integrate the hotel's core team, seconded colleagues returning from sister hotels and new colleagues, says Raffles Hotel Singapore's general manager, Mr Christian Westbeld.

On top of regular sessions that promote cohesiveness such as team building and bonding, there are monthly restoration updates, where colleagues are encouraged to raise all concerns with the senior leadership team.

And for newcomers — such as food and beverage operations manager Jason Tan, 39, who joined in August last year — a buddy system provides support during on-boarding and induction.

Promoting inclusivity

Raffles Hotel Singapore has also been ramping up its engagement with agencies in its commitment to groom its Singaporean talents and suitable candidates who are keen on a hospitality career, says Mr Westbeld.

He speaks fondly of Mr Muhammad Sufiyan Umar, a linen runner in the hotel's housekeeping department for over four years. The cheerful and hardworking 27-year-old graduated from Delta Senior School, a vocational institute for people with mild disabilities.

This is but one of the many success stories that the hotel has had with its partnership with SG Enable, an agency dedicated to empowering people with disabilities.

Links are also forged with hospitality institutions, polytechnics and the Institute of Technical Education (ITE) to recruit suitable students and graduates to join the hotel's Internship, Earn and Learn, and Management Trainee programmes.

Through this route, Ms Shobana S Muthiah, 23, joined the hotel's 18-month Earn and Learn programme to train in hotel operations. She graduated from ITE in 2018 with a Higher Nitec in Hospitality Operations.

That's not all. Raffles Hotel Singapore is working closely with the Employment and Employability Institute (e2i Singapore) and Workforce Singapore (WSG) to enable suitable candidates from other industries to undergo the hotel's Place and Train programme, and meet the needs of those seeking flexible work schedules.



Back row (from left): Ms Elaine Koh, Ms Shobana S Muthiah, general manager Christian Westbeld, Ms Priscilla Leong, Ms Vaithilingam Krishnaveny. Front row (from left): Mr Jason Tan, Mr Muhammad Sufiyan Umar. PHOTO: TED CHEN

BEST PRACTICES

Here are some highlights of working at Raffles Hotel Singapore:

- Fun work culture;
- Highly engaging corporate social responsibility activities and health at workplace initiatives;
- Colleague recognition at industry, national and international levels;
- A 70/20/10 learning and development philosophy comprising experiential learning, relationship learning and formal learning respectively;
- Structured on-the-job training and extensive on-boarding;
- Career mobility within AccorHotels worldwide across more than 30 brands in over 4,500 hotels, resorts and residences in over 100 different countries; and
- Compensation and benefits benchmarked against the best in luxury hospitality.

— Contributed by Mr Christian Westbeld, general manager, Raffles Hotel Singapore

Join a team of talents

"As our Raffles story continues, we want to select, develop and engage our colleagues to be a part of Singapore's finest hospitality team," says Mr Westbeld.

"In turn, we would like our candidates to select us," he adds.

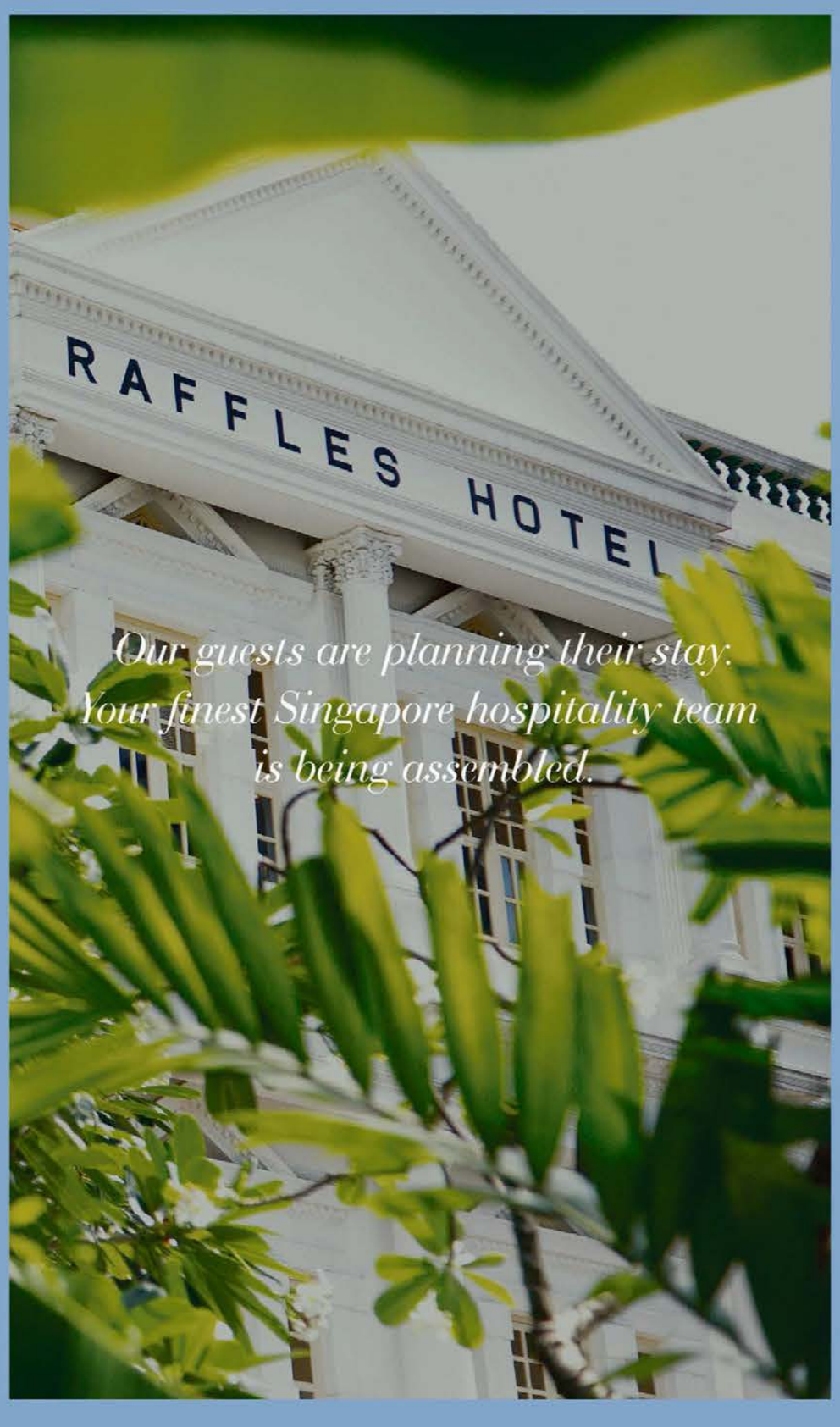
And some talents who have chosen Raffles Hotel Singapore include Ms Elaine Koh, 28, who has worked in free-standing and Michelin-starred restaurants.

She will be the sous chef at the much-anticipated La Dame de Pic restaurant, a collaboration between the hotel and renowned Michelin-starred French chef Anne-Sophie Pic.

Another Raffles Hotel Singapore luminary is Long Bar's head bartender Priscilla Leong, 32, who has a penchant for bartending competitions, creative concepts and bartender training.

Newcomers can seek the sagely advice of Ms Vaithilingam Krishnaveny, 61, who has been with the hotel for over 24 years.

Starting out as a casual part-timer in the laundry department, she was offered growth and development opportunities that helped her rise to the position of laundry supervisor. Currently on secondment, she is learning new skills as a housekeeping public area supervisor.



We are selecting dedicated and passionate talents for our opening team.
Career development opportunities await you.

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Assistant Head Butler
Butler
Assistant Head Concierge
Concierge
Doorman
Porter
Chauffeur

HOUSEKEEPING
Assistant Executive Housekeeper
Assistant Manager
Supervisor
Room Attendant
Public Area Attendant
Laundry Attendant
Runner

FLORAL BOUTIQUE
Florist

SPA
Assistant Manager
Receptionist
Therapist
Attendant

SECURITY
Operations Officer
Senior Security Officer
Security Officer

ENGINEERING
Maintenance Officer
Senior Operations Technician
Operations Technician

CULINARY
Culinary Coordinator
Sous Chef (Chinese Banquet)
Chef Baker
Chef de Partie
Commis I
Kitchen Helper
Assistant Executive Steward
Steward Supervisor
Steward Attendant

FOOD AND BEVERAGE SERVICE
Bar Manager
Chinese Restaurant Manager
Assistant Outlet Manager
Service Executive
Service Associate
Host / Hostess
Food Runner
Sommelier
Commis Sommelier
Associate Sommelier
Assistant Head Bartender
Mixologist
Resident Bartender

RAFFLES GIFT SHOP
Retail Leader
Retail Associate

REVENUE / CALL CENTRE
Revenue Analyst
Executive
Agent

FINANCE
Senior Accounts Assistant
Receiving / Store Officer
Receiving / Store Assistant

SALES & MARKETING
Sales Manager (Corporate and Leisure)
Assistant Sales Manager (Corporate)
Sales Coordinator
Events Executive
Marketing Communications Manager
Marketing Communications Executive

RECRUITMENT FAIR
Monday, 14 January 2019
8.00 am to 8.00 pm
Atrium Ballroom, Raffles City Convention Centre Level 4

Candidates are invited to walk-in for an interview or apply through **www.raffles.com/careers**
Shortlisted applicants will be notified. We invite local candidates to apply.

Be part of our new Raffles story...

Singapore HEALTH Award

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We are the world's largest back-end and testing specialist providing a multitude of services to the semiconductor industry.

Our headquarter is positioned in Taiwan and several manufacturing plants and offices are located in Taiwan, China, USA, Japan and Singapore.

We are seeking individuals who are self-driven, confident, enthusiastic, initiative, resilient, independent, adaptable, possess multitasking skills, relationship driven and are goal-oriented to join our elite team.

Senior Sales Engineer/ Sales Manager

Job Scope:
The job will either cover the whole of S.E.A (inclusive of India) or Europe/Israel or the United States. Besides travelling mainly to the factory sites, customer visits are also required in the region. Customers are from Europe and Asia with manufacturing and international procurement activities based in their respective countries. Candidates can be assigned to any customers within the regions.

Job Responsibilities:
- Assist in Business Development of new accounts, including initial contacts and sales presentations.
- Assist in Business Development of existing accounts to achieve sales target.
- Responsible for all customer service matters related to accounts that have been assigned - including resolving routine operational issues, meeting new requirements, handling complaints and logistic issues.
- Manage customer visits to our factories for various purposes, including plant audit, line tour, commercial discussion to ensure optimum results. Following up on all action items as assigned is required.
- Acting as liaison between the factories and the customers in all matters and issues that have been raised by the customers.
- Forecasting of business and capacity requirements.
- Faithfully and diligently serve the Company and carry out the duties and responsibilities, which the Company may from time to time assign to you.
- Provide weekly/monthly sales generating activities to the management.
- Other job functions that may be required as and when there is a need or business environment and/or requirement change.

Requirements:
- At least 3 to 5 years of working experience in semiconductor industry especially subcontracting of backend services. Preferably with similar years of sales or customer service experience. **(Candidate with relevant experience need apply)**
- Candidates with product engineering or similar job capacity within semi-conductor backend experience will have an added advantage.
- Incumbents must be team players and are sensitive to deadlines given.
- Articulative with good written & spoken English, Chinese (preferred). Required to liaise with Chinese speaking associates.
- Must possess good interpersonal skills.
- Willingness to travel overseas frequently, even at short notice.
- Possess own vehicle (preferred).
- Possess a Degree or a good Diploma in Engineering.

Please email your resume with your photo and indicate your expected salary to:
victorlim@kyec.com.tw

(Only shortlisted candidate will be notified)

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POSITIONS AVAILABLE:

PROPERTY MANAGER (TOWN COUNCIL)
Lead and supervise a team in all estate management matters. Work closely with councilors, residents, grassroots organizations and relevant government agencies.
- Degree in Building / Real Estate Business / Facilities Management or related
- Preferably 1 – 2 years' experience in township management
- Fresh degree holders with relevant degree are welcome to apply

PROPERTY OFFICER
Carry out estate inspection, identify building defects and supervise maintenance and improvement works. Attend to residents' / tenants' enquiries, monitor contractors' performance and manage arrear cases.
- Fresh diploma holders with relevant qualifications welcome to apply
- Preferably 1 - 2 years' experience in township management
- Fresh diploma holders with relevant diploma are welcome to apply

BUILDING INSPECTOR
Carry out routine inspection within estate and check for building defects. Able to read building drawings and manage arrears matters. Liaise with contractors and monitor work progress
- Diploma in Hotel and Leisure Facilities Management / Building
- Min. 5 years of relevant work experience
- Certified Fire Safety Manager
- Working Location: West

SENIOR PROJECT EXECUTIVE (RTO / QS)
Carry out site supervision in compliance with contracts specifications and drawings for Addition & Alteration, Repair & Redecoration and Reroofing Works. Handle contract administration duties pertaining to projects supervised.
- Diploma in Building / Quantity Surveying / Construction Management / Civil Engineering / related
- Must possess Resident Technical Officer Certification
- Min. 2 years of related working experience

FACILITIES TECHNICIAN (6 DAYS / ROTATING SHIFT)
Perform hands-on preventive and corrective maintenance on M&E systems in building according to schedule. Attend to breakdown, servicing, repairing and emergency requests from clients.
- NITEC / Electrical or Mechanical Engineering or related
- Min. 1 year of related working experience
- Working location: Marina Barrage / Tanglin

LICENSED ELECTRICAL WORKER (Electrician Grade)
- Diploma in Electrical Engineering and LEW electrician grade issued by EMA
- Able to commit to weekends/overtime as and when necessary
- Possess class 3 driving license
- Min. 2 years of related working experience

FINANCE & ADMIN ASSISTANT (TOWN COUNCIL)
Perform accounting duties, handle general administrative duties and counter duties on rotational basis.
- GCE 'O' / 'A' Level / LCCI / Higher NITEC (Accounting)
- Min. 2 years of related working experience

PROJECT MANAGER
Keen to lead a team of consultants and project executives in implementing upgrading, cyclical maintenance and green projects. Able to communicate and liaise with various stakeholders in the project.
- Degree in Building / Quantity Surveying / Construction Management / Civil Engineering or related
- Min. 5 years of related working experience

TECHNICIAN / SENIOR TECHNICIAN (Lift)
LIFT INSPECTION/ LOAD TESTING - Carry out lift inspection, annual and 5-year load testing, attend to lift related complaints, checking and certification of parts replacement by lift companies, etc.
- Diploma in Engineering disciplines
- Preferably with some work experience in repair and maintenance works
- Willing to perform overnight standby to attend to emergency calls

HORTICULTURE OFFICER
In-charge of overall maintenance of trees and landscape sites, supervise and control the contractor and liaise with related government agencies regarding horticultural works.
- Diploma in Landscape Design & Horticulture or other related courses.
- Preferably 1 – 2 years' of related working experience
- Fresh diploma holders with relevant diploma are welcome to apply
- Working location: Sembawang

Walk-in-Interviews on:
8 and 15 January 2019 (Tuesday) / 9am to 5pm
(SINGAPOREANS ONLY)
EM Services Pte Ltd
Blk 201 Kim Tian Road, #03-400 S (160201)

Submit your resume via our website (Career Opportunity Page)
http://www.emservices.com.sg/careers
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VICE PRINCIPAL (ADMINISTRATION)

As a Vice Principal (Administration), you will be a key member of the school's senior management team and will be responsible for supporting the holistic education outcomes and learning experience of students through effective school administration and efficient management of resources. You will also lead a team of Executive and Administrative Staff to uphold service excellence in school and work in close collaboration with the teaching staff to achieve the desired school and educational outcomes.

Your key responsibilities include:

- Working with the Principal in the development of the school's strategic goals and plans, allocation of resources to achieve the strategic goals and implementing the plans
- Working with the school leaders to develop stakeholder engagement and partnership plans to build collaborative partnerships and active engagement with identified stakeholders
- Assisting the Principal in the school's planning and management of finances including overseeing procurement processes as well as inventory and asset management
- Overseeing the management of human resource including the planning of manpower needs as well as the development and performance management of the School Administration Team
- Overseeing the maintenance of the physical infrastructure and improvement works of school premises and providing guidance to improve facilities for facilitation of teaching and learning
- Developing and overseeing the implementation of security and safety procedures and measures in the school
- Overseeing the management of student affairs including pupil placement and administration of student-related programmes
- Planning and driving the implementation of IT infrastructure improvement works and projects to increase productivity

Requirements:

- At least 5 years in a leadership position with general management experience. Prior experience in strategic planning, financial and human resource management would be an advantage
- Excellent people and leadership skills
- Passion for educating and interacting with youth and children
- A dynamic and highly driven individual with strong communication and analytical skills
- A university degree; those without a degree and with relevant experience and expertise may also apply

Closing date: **20 Jan 2019**

For more information and to apply, please visit **www.careers.gov.sg**

We regret that incomplete applications will not be considered; only shortlisted applicants will be notified for an interview.

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In the age of cloud computing and big data, Realtek Singapore aims to attract talents in software and digital IC design to join us in delivering exceptional and innovative products to lead the IoT markets.

Singaporeans are welcome to apply!
To explore the below opportunities with us, please email your resume to **Realtek_HR@realtek-sg.com**

SOFTWARE ENGINEER - WIFI/AP ROUTER OR IOT DEVELOPMENT

Description
- Wireless AP or Wi-Fi related software development
- Router protocol, embedded system development
- Provide onsite customer support

Requirements
- Diploma or above in Computer, Electronics or Networking engineering
- Familiar with C/C++, Linux system, driver related, networking and embedded system development
- Wifi-related experience will be a plus

DIGITAL IC DESIGN ENGINEER

Description
- Verilog RTL design implementation
- Logic design, RTL coding, testbech writing
- RTL / gate-level simulation / verification and code coverage

Requirements
- Bachelor Degree or above in Electronic Engineering.
- Good knowledge on digital and Verilog VLSI design, Verilog simulation and logic synthesis.
- Strong analytical and problem solving skills.

TEST ENGINEER

Description
- Development of test plan for IoT/Wifi router or related products
- Execution of tests to find out potential issues
- Partner R&D team to reproduce customer issues
- Conducting of pre-test for IoT/Wifi router related certification

Requirements
- Diploma or above in Computer Science, Computer or Electrical Engineering
- Familiar with C/C++ and scripting
- Excellent problem solving and debugging skills

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NATIONAL YOUTH SPORTS INSTITUTE

National Youth Sports Institute (NYSI) is a central resource, expertise and management body, placed to understand the needs of high performing student-athletes across sports and to address evolving challenges in the sports ecosystem. NYSI will propagate tested systems, processes and best practices to the wider youth sports excellence ecosystem in Singapore to aid aspiring talented student-athletes in achieving sporting breakthroughs and win glory for Singapore. We invite suitably qualified candidates for the following positions:

MANAGER, PERFORMANCE PATHWAY

You will work with coaches, to design and deliver a comprehensive plan dovetailing all aspects of the youth athlete developmental pathway(s) in NYSI (up to 3 sports) and ensuring that coaches and key support staff provide critical input where needed so as to accelerate and sustain the development of identified athletes. You will work with other partner agencies and partners to continue the development of a pathway curriculum and profiling system as part of the national athlete development pathway that captures real-time key progression markers of identified athletes from junior/youth level progressing through to elite level. You will work in partnership with the sport science and talent identification team to develop and validate specific talent profiles and ensure accurate profiling of athlete potential and performance.

Requirements
- Preferably a degree in Coaching Science, Sport Science or related subject
- At least 3 years of working experience in a talent development environment in particular with young athletes
- Have worked with a variety of sports, including team and individual sports
- Have a passion for sports (high performance aspect) with active involvement either as a national athlete, coach, participant or support crew

SPORT PSYCHOLOGIST / BEHAVIOURAL SCIENTIST

As part of the Sport Psychology team, you will deliver and monitor support to high level youth athletes and coaches. You will lead the design and delivery of behavioural interventions, or "nudges", aimed at encouraging youth athletes and coaches to exhibit behaviours aligned to high performance outcomes. You will facilitate the delivery of these interventions and manage the collation and analysis of results. You will also conduct and present scientific research into fields related to psychology or behavioural science in the area of youth athlete development, youth coaching and/or other relevant areas.

Requirements
- A degree in Psychology, Behavioural Science or related field
- A post-graduate qualification in Sport Psychology or Behavioural Science is an advantage
- At least 3 years of working experience in a talent development environment catering to a youth population
- Involvement in projects aiming to test, observe and analyse behaviours under changing conditions
- Experience of working as part of a multidisciplinary team
- Understanding of data analysis and/or statistics packages (such as SPSS, MATLAB, R, Python etc.)
- An active involvement in and passion for sport either as a coach, participant or volunteer

If you are a highly motivated, engaging and enthusiastic individual with an understanding of the needs of elite student-athletes and if you want to work and excel in a challenging environment, we invite you to join us. You should forward a detailed CV with a recent photograph, stating your academic / professional qualifications, working experience and current and expected salaries to **hr@nysi.org.sg** by **18 January 2019.** Please indicate the job title on the subject heading of your email. **We regret that only shortlisted candidates will be notified.**

CerealTech SCHOOL OF BAKING TECHNOLOGY

Bakery Instructor / Lecturer

You will need to have...

- a recognised Baking qualification
- at least 5 years post graduate experience in a range of baking establishments
- a full or partial ACTA certificate with DACE certification preferred
- supervisory experience in the baking industry
- good communication skills and a team player attitude, and
- sound technical knowledge across all areas of baking

If this fits you and you are keen to join a progressive team, send your resume and salary expectation to **christeo@cerealtech.com**.

Only short listed candidates will be notified.

ONE people.sg

OnePeople.sg (OPSG) was launched in May 2007 to champion racial harmony initiatives in Singapore. OPSG works hand in hand with community partners, organisations and individuals to promote programmes and initiatives that foster deeper interaction, understanding and appreciation of our multi-ethnic and multi-religious community.

We are seeking dynamic individuals with a high level of initiative to join our team as:

PROGRAMME MANAGER

You will initiate and develop community partnerships, public education and capacity building programmes and initiatives to strengthen community engagement as well as drive youth and volunteer engagement efforts.

Key requirements:
- Degree with a minimum of 2 years relevant working experience
- Passion for inter-racial / inter-religious community development work
- Proven ability in conceptualizing and developing community outreach and capacity building programmes for community leaders, educators, schools and youths
- Experience in working with religious and/or community organisations and able to operationalize large-scale projects
- Experience in programme management, administration and evaluation
- Adaptable, strong interpersonal skills, analytical and objective-driven
- Ability to work well in teams yet competent in managing projects independently
- Volunteer management experience will be an advantage

If you are a highly-motivated individual who has what it takes, we welcome you to join us. Salary will commensurate with working experience and qualifications. New graduates are welcomed to apply.

Interested applicants are invited to download the application form at **www.onepeople.sg** and send your resume to **The Manager, OnePeople.sg, 381 Toa Payoh Lorong 1, Singapore 319758 or Email: hrmanager@onepeople.sg.**

Closing date of application: 20 January 2019. *Only shortlisted candidates will be notified.*

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RDC ARCHITECTS

We are seeking highly motivated and independent individuals to join us as:

PROJECT ARCHITECT

- Min. 3 years of project working experience in Singapore
- Registered / Registrable with BOA Singapore
- Experienced with entire project processes including authorities submission & site inspections
- Able to manage projects independently
- MRT projects experience advantageous

DESIGN ARCHITECT

- Registered / Registrable with BOA Singapore
- Good design capability and creativity
- Good presentation skills advantageous
- Committed, resourceful and able to work as a team

ARCHITECTURAL ASSISTANT

- Polytechnic Diploma with min. 3 years of working experience
- Proficient in BIM
- Committed and able to work within tight deadlines

Submit your CV with current & expected salaries, and recent photo to: **RDC Architects Pte Ltd**
152 Beach Road #01-01, Gateway East, Singapore 189721 / **email**: careers@rdca.com.sg
Only shortlisted candidates will be notified.

ST THE SUNDAY TIMES

Here's what you can look forward to reading this week in The Sunday Times

DARE TO DISCIPLINE
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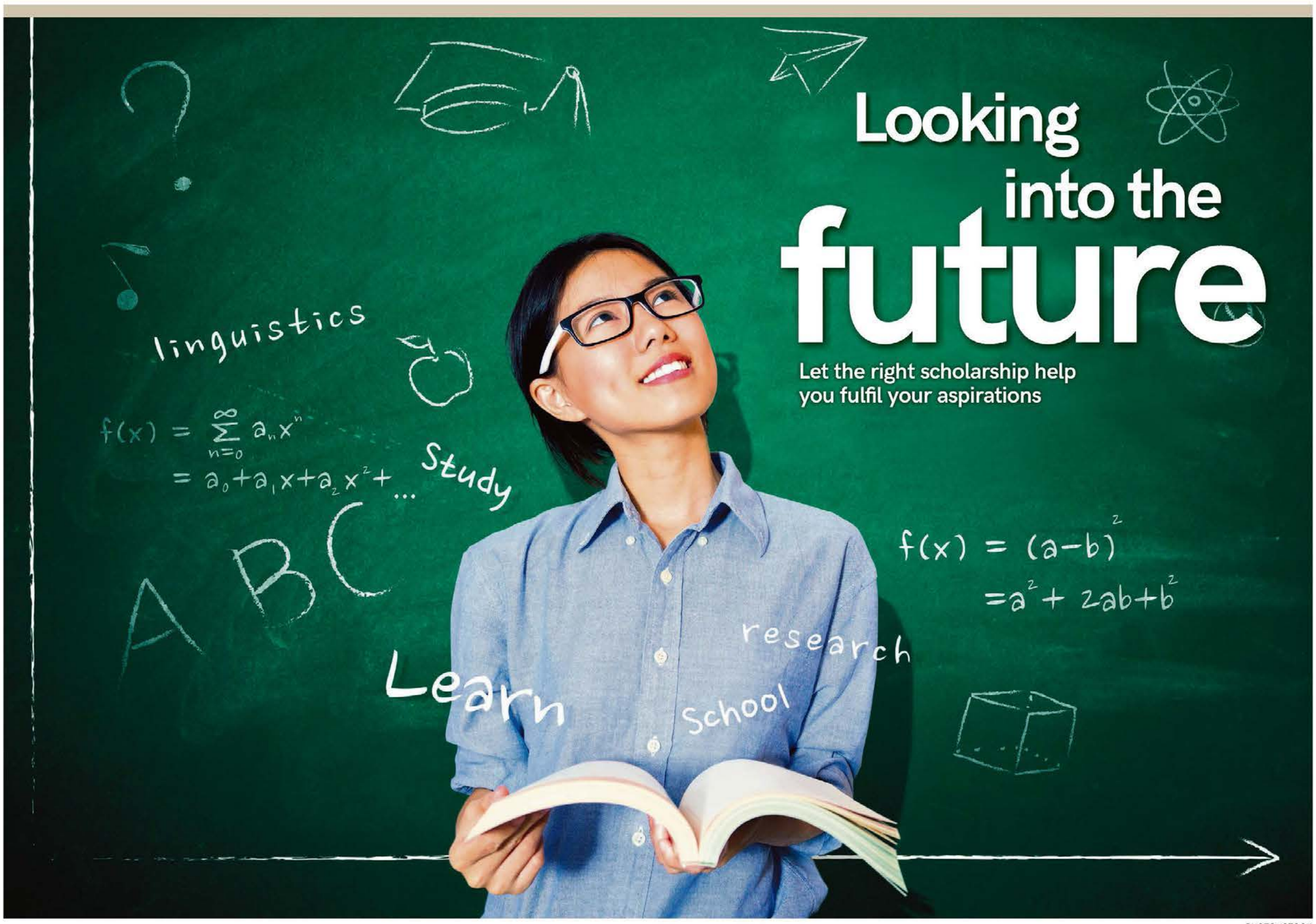


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Miss Chan spent late nights with bats in Australia doing research for her final year project.
PHOTO: TED CHEN

Bats off to you

NTU scholar Jaslyn Chan relishes unique research opportunities in bat caves

BY NIVANI ELANGOVAN

Most people travel to Australia to enjoy theme parks and beaches, but not Miss Jaslyn Chan. The 22-year-old is proud that she spent five months in Brisbane, Australia analysing bat echolocation calls.

"I climbed into caves with known bat colonies and watched as they flew out at dusk for their daily hunting and foraging," Miss Chan adds excitedly.

The opportunity to do such unique research came because she was part of the CN Yang Scholars Programme (CNYSP), offered by the Nanyang Technological University (NTU). Miss Chan is currently majoring in Environmental Earth Systems Science (EESS) with a specialisation in society and earth systems.

Miss Chan says, "The offers of overseas learning trips, sponsorships for science programmes and mentorships by alumni made me feel like I would be well-supported and valued as an individual."

Long nights with bats

One key benefit of being in CNYSP was being able to pursue unique research projects. From March to Aug last year, Miss Chan was based in Brisbane, Australia, conducting an analysis of bat echolocation calls to help create an automated acoustic identification system for Australian bats.

"Using acoustic analysis programmes, I extracted certain call parameters that could be used to differentiate between different bat species," she explains. "We managed to create an identifier that could differentiate between 23 Australian bat species with high accuracy."

Miss Chan also embarked on a field trip to the north of Australia, where she set up bat traps to aid her research. This part of the research project involved waking up early in the morning every day, checking the bat traps to make sure the ones that were caught did not overheat.

Just the beginning

The research on bats was Miss Chan's final year project. She had initially planned to do her research locally but was inspired to travel overseas because of CNYSP's promise of administrative and financial support.

Dr Shawn Lum and Assoc Prof Adam Switzer, faculty members at NTU's Asian School of the Environment, helped by putting Miss Chan in touch with relevant contacts.

"CNYSP supports budding researchers and it is a good stepping stone for anyone who is looking to go into academia," she says.

It was this research trip that deepened Miss Chan's passion for research and wildlife.

She says: "I've always wanted to work with wildlife in one form or another and this experience strengthened my resolve in my plans for my future.

"I was very lucky to have experienced supervisors who taught me a lot about bats and their ecology. I realised that I've only just skimmed the surface of this area of study, but I'm inspired by their passion and knowledge. This is an affirmation that I might be on the right path toward doing something meaningful and enjoyable in the future."

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Mission-driven

IO Joshua Ebenezer Jesudason carries a deep sense of purpose in his work, inspired by his parents' humanitarian and literacy work in Papua New Guinea

BY ESTHER TEO

Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP) Joshua Ebenezer Jesudason, 24, had a childhood unlike most other Singaporeans.

He grew up in a remote village in Papua New Guinea where his parents did humanitarian and literacy work among the local people.

"The village was a short plane ride from the nearest town, or in the case of inclement weather, a two-week trek across adverse terrain," recalls ASP Jesudason, who lived there till he was eight.

These days, the Singapore Police Force (SPF) Investigation Officer (IO) — who was awarded the President's Scholarship and Singapore Police Force Overseas Scholarship in 2013 — is worlds away from the mountainous province of his boyhood. But he carries the same sense of purpose his parents had.

As an IO at the Central Police Division, ASP Jesudason interviews and takes statements from persons of interest in a case, gathers and examines evidence, and seizes and manages case exhibits. He also prepares legal documents when the cases he handles are to be presented in court and readies himself with the details of the cases as he may be called upon as a prosecution witness during trial.

Before becoming an IO, he was a Ground Response Force officer at Rochor Neighbourhood Police Centre where he conducted patrol duties, responded to 999 emergency calls, manned police counters, and took walk-in reports.

During his one-and-a-half years in the Force, he has arrested violent suspects, saved critically-injured persons from vehicle accidents and evacuated residents from burning buildings.

ASP Jesudason, who is passionate about helping, and justice, says: "Situations of injustice rouse me to action, so I am happy to work hard when there is an opportunity to remedy them."

He admits he did not set out to be a police officer. Back in junior college, he planned to read law and focus on pro-bono work, or to work in a non-governmental organisation.

But his teacher saw his aptitude for debating and his good academic standing, and recommended him for the Public Service Commission and Home Team scholarships. The SPF career centre then invited him to shadow police officers on duty during his school holidays. The experience made ASP Jesudason realise his true calling.

He attended Balliol College, Oxford University from 2013 to 2016 on The Singapore Police Force Scholarship where he read History and Politics. After graduating with first class honours, he then pursued a Master of Science in Conflict Studies (with distinction) at the London School of Economics, to understand the internal dynamics and socio-economic and ideological drivers of extremist groups.

During his summer breaks, ASP Jesudason would return to Singapore once a year for attachments with the SPF. These stints eased him into the SPF ecosystem, and made it easier for him to hit the ground running when he returned to active duty in 2017.

There is always something to learn as a young officer.

Through training at the Police Academy, ASP Jesudason developed his leadership style. He has since worked on various projects and teams, and taken on leadership roles during daily duties and major police deployments.

"I have improved my people-management and communication skills, and been tested in leadership roles. I have also become a better and more well-rounded person," he says.

ASP Jesudason relishes taking on the multitude of challenges faced by the SPF, including crimes that are always evolving in its complexity with digital and transnational elements.

He says: "With challenge comes opportunity. I am confident the SPF will continue to evolve to meet the challenges at hand.

"I feel privileged to play a part in this next phase of our Force's developmental history."



PHOTO: SINGAPORE POLICE FORCE

"I am confident the SPF will continue to evolve to meet the challenges at hand. I feel privileged to play a part in this next phase of our Force's developmental history."

ASP JOSHUA EBENEZER JESUDASON (ABOVE)
INVESTIGATION OFFICER
SINGAPORE POLICE FORCE



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Putting her best foot forward

The right scholarship set Ms Daphne Tan firmly on the path to her dream job of being a podiatrist

BY BALVINDER SANDHU

Ms Daphne Tan was keen to pursue a career in the health sciences after she graduated from Hwa Chong Institution.

She loved meeting people and hearing their stories, so she felt that getting to do the same for her patients while helping them, was a bonus.

Her interest in craft work — knitting and jewellery-making — also played a part in her decision on which area to specialise.

Ms Tan says: "I was interested in speech therapy, dietetics and podiatry, and I picked podiatry as I felt it was the most 'hands-on'."

"Podiatry needs a lot of dexterity when it comes to debridement as well as insole-making and modifications, which makes the work even more dynamic for me."

As podiatry degrees are only available overseas, she decided to apply for the Ministry Of Health (MOH) Health Sciences Scholarship in 2008.

Ms Tan explains that the scholarship helped to ease a financial burden that would otherwise have been huge for her parents, and focus on her studies and enjoy her time at university.

A step into independence

Miss Tan opted for a Bachelor of Health Sciences with Master of Podiatric Practice (Hons.) qualification at La Trobe University in Melbourne, Australia. She found the experience of being overseas on her own challenging, yet empowering.



Clinical placements helped Ms Tan to build confidence and prepare her for her career as a podiatrist.
PHOTO: TED CHEN

She says: "It's the first step into adulthood where you truly have to fend for yourself and take care of your own needs."

"On a normal day, it isn't that difficult, but the times you fall sick are when things get rough. Thank goodness for good friends who helped along the way."

Ms Tan is also thankful for the clinical placements she did during her course. The chatty patients in Australia helped the self-professed shy student learn to open up and become more outspoken, in order to build a rapport with them quickly. This helped her prepare for working life as it built up her confidence when speaking to people from all walks of life.

A steady path

Today, Ms Tan is a senior podiatrist at National University Hospital.

Although her current job can be tough at times, as she often deals with patients in a lot of physical pain, the 29-year-old believes that the key to longevity in this career is to empathise with patients while maintaining a professional distance to prevent burnout.

"Learning how to soothe patients with words is also an important skill to have," she adds.

Ms Tan recommends healthcare or health sciences scholarships "for those with a passion to serve in the health industry and pursue their studies without too much stress financially".

She also appreciated the pre-departure activities that enabled her to network with students of other healthcare disciplines.

"If you are certain of the path you wish to take, this scholarship can aid and enrich your experience before you step into the career of your choice," she says.



Ms Cheryl Seet finds nursing to be a perfect fit to her caring nature.
PHOTO: TED CHEN

Beyond the call of duty

For senior staff nurse Cheryl Seet, caring for people is more than just a job

BY HAFIZ RASID

Being a medical professional gives Ms Cheryl Seet special opportunities to really help someone.

A senior staff nurse with KK Women's and Children's Hospital, Ms Seet, 25, recalls a previous incident when a man had a seizure in public, and everyone around him was afraid to help.

Being trained to deal with such a medical emergency, Ms Seet stepped forward and turned him on his side, known as a recovery position. His condition improved soon after.

That was not the only time she has gone to someone's aid off duty. She says: "I was surprised that I was so calm during these incidents. My nursing knowledge enabled me to help someone at a critical time."

Nursing has also made her more self-confident and, consequently, more willing to reach out and help people.

Taking chances

The desire to help others is in her blood, and it led Ms Seet to a career where caring is an essential part of her day.

Even though she privately felt that her grades were not up to scratch, she took a leap of faith and applied for the SingHealth Nursing Degree Scholarship in 2011. To her delight, she was successful.

Ms Seet says: "I think there is a misconception that you must have stellar grades to be awarded a scholarship. The panel takes a holistic view of a candidate for the scholarship — it considers your co-curricular activities, leadership qualities, communication skills and passion for nursing."

She graduated from the National University of Singapore with a Bachelor of Nursing (Merit), and appreciates that it enabled her to study without worrying about the costly course fees.

She says: "It is a privilege that I was offered this scholarship and I am grateful to SingHealth. I was able to focus on studying, and even had a monthly allowance that enabled me to live comfortably and even give something back to my parents."

Hands-on experience

As part of her course, Ms Seet was posted to various hospitals to gain practical experience, with each stint lasting one to two weeks.

There, she experienced nursing life in the different wards that specialised in surgical, gynaecological, neonatal and paediatric, and geriatric medicine.

While the stints were "both nerve-wracking and eye-opening", because she was exposed to a wide range of cases, she is also grateful she picked up practical skills by working closely with on-duty nurses and through interactions with patients.

She adds: "Beyond the hands-on training, I also saw the nurses' passion and heart for their work. Even today, I remember the kindness of these nurses as they spoke to their patients, and I feel so proud to emulate them in my job," she adds.

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Scaling new heights

Smart Nation scholar Yin Yi De's love for data science trumps his love-hate relationship with programming

BY BRYANT CHAN

He loves it. It loves him not.

If his first tango with the programming language Java is anything to go by, then it'd appear that Mr Yin Yi De loves programming — but it's not reciprocated.

It happened during an elective in his second year at University College London.

After poring over hundreds of lines of code to solve a bug that had plagued him the entire day, his program finally managed to compile. But in his excitement, while trying to duplicate it, his hand slipped and he accidentally deleted the entire program.

He then spent the next eight hours working feverishly through the night, re-coding the entire project from scratch.

"You asked for a memorable experience," he says with a laugh. "That was definitely memorable, albeit horrendous."

Despite that disastrous experience, his love for programming remains undiminished.

"I immediately took to programming because I really enjoyed the process of thinking through programming problems, and seeing my solutions work out," he says.

As an economics undergraduate, he did not see the merits of programming and data science until he had taken some econometrics modules.

Through them, he realised the importance of data in forming his views beyond traditional economic theories.

He recalls a research paper that used data, supported by insights from behavioural economics, to explain why a specific labour supply curve deviated from the conventional upward-sloping curve.

"Through many encounters like this, I became fascinated with the way data can be used creatively to debunk preconceived notions and offer new insights."

While the seed of a postgraduate degree in computing and data science had been planted in his mind, Mr Yin was reluctant to follow up on it, as he did not want to burden his parents with further financial responsibilities.

But that changed when he went to a Government Technology Agency (GovTech) networking event in London and found out about the Smart Nation Scholarship.

Awarded by the Infocomm Media Development Authority, the Cyber Security Agency of Singapore and GovTech, the Smart Nation Scholarship aims to develop and nurture technology talents and leaders in the public service, letting them carve out their own career pathway in applied technology.

When Mr Yin learnt more about GovTech, it dawned on him that working there would give him the opportunity to do meaningful work that would benefit society, let him pursue his own interests, and help to bridge the gaps in his computing knowledge.

Today, he plans to pursue a Master's degree in computing science, as part of the pioneering batch of Smart Nation scholars.

"I think data science has massive potential to drive progress for Singapore," he says. "It can empower our decisionmakers to carry out evidence-based decision-making, which will help us to optimise the use of limited resources and target important issues that have a real impact on the lives of Singaporeans."

Take Singapore's transport system as an example. By collecting and analysing commuter data, the government can optimise the provision of transport services according to the level of demand, while taking into account infrastructural limitations.

His eyes light up at his own mention of the word "infrastructure", in which he sees a great deal of potential. He is particularly intrigued by the Smart Nation Sensor Platform which gains insights via data collected by sensors mounted on lamp posts. Starting with his internship at GovTech next summer, Mr Yin hopes to work on projects that will both hone his skills as a programmer and allow him to serve the public good.

"Ultimately, I want to do something meaningful that involves a skill that I can develop over time," he says. "I'm new to the world of programming and technology, so I'm just excited to explore whatever comes my way."

> I think data science has massive potential to drive progress for Singapore, It can empower our decisionmakers to carry out evidence-based decision-making, which will help us to optimise the use of limited resources and target important issues that have a real impact on the lives of Singaporeans.
>
> MR YIN YI DE
> Smart Nation scholar



PHOTOS: YIN YI DE

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Taking flight

CAAS scholar Sim Jun An wears two hats at work



I find my work meaningful as it contributes to the overall effort to ensure safe and efficient air travel in our region.

MR SIM JUN ANN
executive engineer
CAAS

PHOTO: TED CHEN

BY NIVANI ELANGOVAN

While some may struggle with the demands of one full-time position, Mr Sim Jun An can proudly say that he can juggle two — within the same company.

The 27-year-old works at the Civil Aviation Authority of Singapore (CAAS) as an executive engineer for surveillance projects, as well as a manager in digital strategy and architecture.

"I find my work meaningful as it contributes to the overall effort to ensure safe and efficient air travel in our region," says Mr Sim.

Prior to this, Mr Sim was enrolled in the Renaissance Engineering Programme (REP) at Nanyang Technological University, where he was awarded the CAAS Undergraduate Scholarship. He graduated with a bachelor in engineering science (aerospace engineering) and Master of Science in technology management.

The CAAS Undergraduate Scholarship enabled him to explore various sectors of the organisation by undergoing internships at different divisions in the summer.

Mr Sim's first internship involved developing a new framework to improve the efficiency of safety oversight, while his second internship allowed him to assist in the development of enforcement decision aid for non-compliance of regulations.

He says: "The internships gave me a better understanding and insight into the industry and the regulations developed by CAAS to ensure safe air travel."

At CAAS now, Mr Sim's concurrent roles allow him to further his capabilities in contrasting sectors. As an executive engineer, he prepares technical specifications and documents, and subsequently manages the project implementation phase. In the digital strategy and architecture team, he works with his colleagues to formulate strategies that can drive digital transformation in CAAS and support different line divisions in their digital efforts.

"I get to work with industry partners to develop and implement new innovative technologies that could potentially enhance our air traffic management capabilities," he says.

Mr Sim's interest in the aviation industry and subsequently the CAAS Undergraduate Scholarship was due to a desire for a career path that serves a larger purpose - one that goes beyond driving profits.

"I am also fascinated by Singapore's ability to ensure safe air travel for passengers, given the high volume of air traffic in our skies," he adds. "Given the trans-boundary and dynamic nature of the aviation industry, I believe it will provide an exciting career."

With the fast-evolving nature of the industry, Mr Sim hopes to gain deeper knowledge in the different operational aspects at CAAS, so he can develop strategies or policies to resolve issues faced by stakeholders in the industry.

"I look forward to honing my technical knowledge and expertise through the extensive developmental and training opportunities provided by CAAS," says Mr Sim, "so that I can contribute significantly to projects with industry partners."



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PHOTO: TED CHEN

Helping people with physical disabilities improve their lives is meaningful work to Miss Quake. PHOTO: TED CHEN

Replacing limitations with empowerment

Miss Tabitha Quake's work in prosthetics and orthotics offers her patients a new lease of life

BY SANDRA CAMPBELL

For Miss Tabitha Quake, 29, prosthetics and orthotics (P&O) is more than an intellectual pursuit that utilises her technical interests and skills. It enables the senior prosthetist and orthotist with Tan Tock Seng Hospital's (TTSH) Foot Care & Limb Design Centre to "help people with physical disabilities live better lives".

Prosthetists and orthotists treat physical limitations resulting from illness and disabilities. They design, fabricate and fit custom-made artificial limbs, braces and other external contraptions.

In 2008, Miss Quake secured a health sciences scholarship from the Ministry of Health Holdings (MOHH) to do a Bachelor of Science (Honours) degree in P&O at Scotland's University of Strathclyde.

The scholarship covered all her tuition fees during her four years of undergraduate study which she could not have afforded otherwise.

Clinical placements within the United Kingdom for hands-on experiences and exposure to cases not studied at Strathclyde meant Miss Quake never stayed in the same place for more than a year at a time.

"There were also two sought-after overseas placements per cycle," she says.

"I was fortunate to be assigned to Sweden's Skandinaviska Ortopedtekniska Laboratoriet, where I worked with different prosthetic systems using high-end components such as carbon fibre feet and bionic knees."

Miss Quake did her second-year mid-term attachment at TTSH, the largest public provider of P&O services in Singapore. The attachment eased her into Singapore's healthcare system and helped her understand the unique needs of the patients here.

After graduating in 2012, she joined the centre full-time, where her skills, design-technology interests and outside-the-box thinking are welcomed. She casts, fits and modifies customised artificial limbs and braces with the help of technicians.

"Adapting the techniques while managing expectations can be demanding, especially in Asian healthcare, where there is a greater disability stigma," she says.

Orthotics can be quite complex. An early case in her career saw her and a senior colleague in an operating theatre to cast a mould on a scoliosis patient for a spinal brace immediately after surgery.

"It was my biggest cast-and-brace case, but not the last. After handling hip disarticulation and more scoliosis cases, custom spinal braces became my sub-speciality," says Miss Quake.

From 2014 to 2016, she also ran a weekly paediatric clinic at KK Women's and Children's Hospital (KKH), where she mainly did spinal bracing. She is currently helping KKH set up its own P&O service centre, and has been supervising and guiding a P&O scholar working there, to ensure everything runs smoothly.

He helps patients find their footing

Senior occupational therapist Jason Peh guides patients in regaining their independence

BY AUDREY NG

A short stint shadowing a physiotherapist at work exposed Mr Jason Peh, 29, to allied health professions and sparked his interest in the field of occupational therapy.

"It is a mix of science and arts, using medical knowledge, and creative adaptations and equipment to regain function. The focus on a person's goals in physical rehabilitation really got me," he says.

So he applied for the Alexandra Health health science scholarship after graduating from National Junior College. He went on to do his undergraduate studies in health sciences and a Master of Occupational Therapy Practice at La Trobe University in Melbourne, Australia, from 2010 to 2013.

Mr Peh greatly enjoyed his university days in Melbourne as it gave him the foundation to understand how body parts, muscles and nerves work together through a human cadaver.

"It opened my eyes to the intricate nature of the human body, and I'm able to understand my patients better as I had a glimpse of what takes place beneath the skin," he says.

The internships also gave him valuable experience. One was a home-based rehabilitation setting where he learnt how to be resourceful in using adaptive devices and specialised assistive aids to enable people to live independently in their homes.

Working in the acute stroke unit in a hospital, he learnt valuable soft skills from his supervisor, who also inspired him to engage with difficult patients. Another attachment took him out of his comfort zone and taught him how to understand the needs of mental health patients.

Today, Mr Peh is almost into his fifth year working at Khoo Teck Puat Hospital as a senior occupational therapist.

He is in the community care team where he makes home visits to discharged patients — it can be up to five in a day — and provides training to the patient's caregiver or family member. He also modifies their home environment, prescribes adaptive equipment, and adjusts their daily routines to ensure safety in their homes.

Mr Peh also runs a motorised-aid clinic twice a week. This involves assessing a patient's ability to drive a motorised scooter and teaching them how to navigate lifts and public transport.

One other skill that he has gained on the job is picking up the Malay language from colleagues and patients to communicate better with more people.

He is also starting a group with home and community occupational therapists to pool resources, share experiences and support one another, to ultimately benefit patients.

"The job can be physically and emotionally demanding as you're investing in people's lives and dealing with the fragility of life, but it is a rewarding career."

Mr Peh recommends this scholarship to those interested in pursuing occupational therapy as a career.

"It has enabled me to immerse myself in a different culture, step out of my comfort zone, learn more about the healthcare system in Australia, and appreciate what we have and can achieve in Singapore."



Mr Peh feels that being able to make an impact in people's lives makes the physical and emotional demands of his job worthwhile. PHOTO: TED CHEN

Keeping commuters moving

Executive engineer Jerrold Thong enjoys the different scopes of work offered to him at LTA



The decisions we make for MRT rail alignment often have a lasting impact, that's why we explore all possible options to achieve the best connectivity, compliant design and cost-effective outcome. This requires creativity and imagination at times.

MR JERROLD THONG
executive engineer
LTA

PHOTO: TED CHEN

BY NUR SYAHIIDAH ZAINAL

His passion for land transport, and his belief that a job must have both purpose and impact, led Mr Jerrold Thong to take up the Land Transport Authority (LTA) Overseas Undergraduate Scholarship in 2008.

The 29-year-old says: "I am passionate about land transport and how it affects everyone in Singapore. LTA provides ample opportunities for different scopes of work, be it in rail, roads, or active mobility."

The scholarship enabled him to pursue a Masters in Engineering with Business Finance (Mechanical) at University College London, a unique combination that helped him to develop both technical engineering knowledge and business skills.

"This has helped me to better analyse issues I encounter during my work, such as considering the cost implications of various engineering solutions."

Even before officially joining LTA full-time, Mr Thong already had a taste of working there from his two internship stints.

His first internship was with the Rolling Stock team, where he helped with the testing and commissioning of new trains, and got to witness how new trains were delivered to the Bishan train depot.

His second, with the Intelligent Transport System Center, taught him how the expressways here are monitored to optimise traffic on the roads.

"Both internships helped me better appreciate the challenges faced by the land transport industry, and the different contributions towards a safer and reliable transport system," says the executive engineer with LTA's rail design development division, which is responsible for the design of the MRT rail alignment.

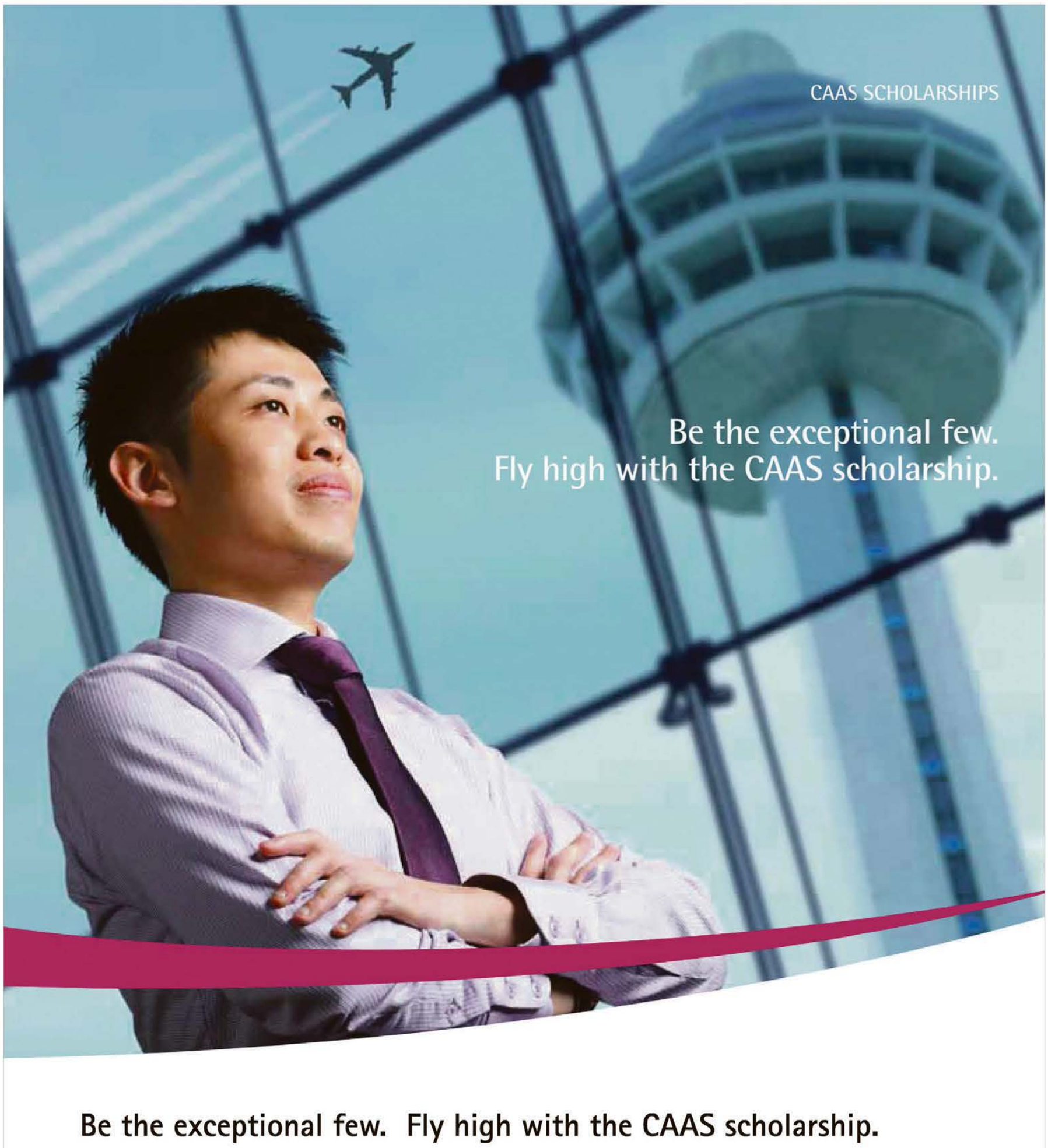
The team is currently working on the rail alignment for the upcoming Cross-Island Line. By creating a 3D design, they figure out how the rail line will navigate around various land constraints and the resulting depth of the stations.

"These issues are usually multidisciplinary and often require us to work with various stakeholders to achieve a well-balanced and satisfactory outcome, and a fit-for-purpose engineering design," says Mr Thong.

He cites his work on the Land Transport Master Plan 2040 public consultation as an outstanding experience. The process of gathering feedback from the public regarding the land transport system has been "humbling".

"I learn how to engage different stakeholders — from practising active listening to giving them the assurance that their feedback will be taken into account in the next Land Transport Master Plan. It is also very rewarding when our conversations lead them to understand the issues we sometimes face in our jobs," he adds.

"The decisions we make for MRT rail alignment often have a lasting impact, that's why we explore all possible options to achieve the best connectivity, compliant design and cost-effective outcome. This requires creativity and imagination at times."



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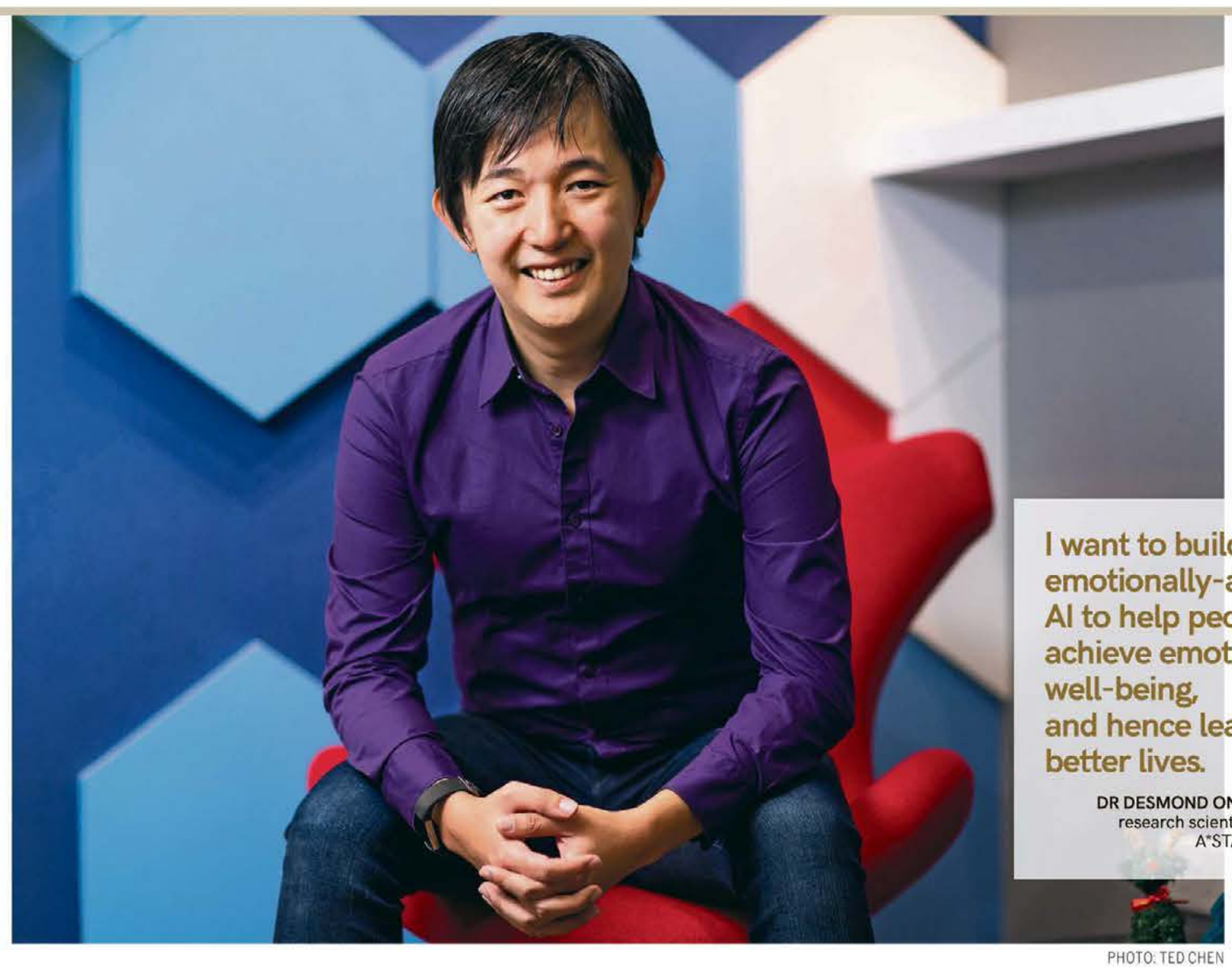
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Adding the human touch

Research scientist Desmond Ong believes emotional awareness is key to better AI

BY LUKE TAN



I want to build emotionally-aware AI to help people achieve emotional well-being, and hence lead better lives.

DR DESMOND ONG
research scientist
A*STAR

PHOTO: TED CHEN

Is it possible for "cold" computers to ever understand us?

This is the question Dr Desmond Ong constantly asks himself. Yet he is hopeful that his research brings humanity one step closer to this possibility each day.

The 31-year-old is a research scientist at the A*STAR Artificial Intelligence Initiative and Institute of High Performance Computing. His research focuses on human reasoning with the aim of improving artificial intelligence.

But Dr Ong, who majored in physics and economics from Cornell University in 2011, became involved in this field through a chance development.

During his studies, he attended a lecture by a professor who showed people silent clips of election candidates. They were able to accurately predict the winners by observing each candidate's attitude and charisma.

Dr Ong was intrigued by how such aspects of human behaviour could be studied scientifically. After completing his undergraduate degree, he went on to obtain a doctorate in cognitive psychology and a master's degree in computer science from Stanford University in 2017.

"This might be an unusual choice for an A*STAR scholar," he says. "But when I was applying for my PhD in 2011, I realised that as AI becomes a bigger part of our lives, more researchers who understand both psychology and AI would be needed to design better, more human-like AI."

He also credits the National Science Scholarship (BS-PhD) — which he was awarded as both an undergraduate and a doctoral student — for setting the stage.

"During my first summer vacation, I did an eight-week research attachment with A*STAR, and gained a better understanding of research and the skills required." Dr Ong is especially keen to correct the misconception that psychology is not related to science.

"Psychology is not just about marketing campaigns or dealing with clinical disorders," he says. "There is so much more to it."

To help computers "understand" human emotions, thoughts, facial expressions and gestures, Dr Ong uses equations and algorithms, and has to design scientific experiments.

"My job involves formulating precise research questions, designing experiments that can answer those questions, and building computational models that translate the answers into a language that computers can understand.

Giving back to society

While the word "robots" often brings to mind Hollywood humanoids and online "chatbots", Dr Ong's work is far more practical.

One of his projects is Tomo, a robot "pet" that runs away or approaches, depending on how it is called, which helps instil correct behaviour in children.

His long-term goal is to develop robots that can help with mental health issues or learning disabilities, such as healthcare robots that can detect pain and loneliness in patients, or emotionally-aware robot tutors to help improve learning.

His wife jokingly says that Dr Ong wants to build a "Baymax for emotions", referring to the tirelessly loyal healthcare robot from the Disney animated movie Big Hero 6.

Dr Ong agrees. "I want to build emotionally-aware AI to help people achieve emotional well-being, and hence lead better lives."

This is why he encourages students to explore social sciences like psychology, sociology and linguistics because they play a critical role in understanding what makes communities tick.

"Social scientists also play a crucial role in doing research that benefits society," he says.

"Within A*STAR, we have a growing group of social scientists who are interested in tackling social issues using computational approaches.

"I am grateful that I can contribute to society as a computational social scientist."

Shaping the future

Miss Lau Chin Ling aims to inspire the next generation through her teaching

BY REBECCA WONG



Miss Lau makes time to connect with her students despite her busy schedule. PHOTO: TED CHEN

Even as a student at Guangyang Secondary School, Miss Lau Chin Ling's passion for teaching was evident.

Her then-Chinese teacher had organised a peer-led teaching activity for the class, and Miss Lau was tasked with preparing teaching materials and conducting a short lesson in Mandarin.

The experience was one she enjoyed tremendously and still recalls to this day.

Now, the 26 year-old is a Chinese language teacher at Cantonment Primary School, a role she takes on with much zest and dedication.

Having started her career in June 2018, the past few months have been something of a whirlwind for Miss Lau.

The educator jokingly compares herself to an octopus, given her need to juggle multiple responsibilities.

"There are many things to do and think about almost concurrently, and many roles to fulfil," she says.

Besides teaching Chinese to Primary 2 and 4 pupils, Miss Lau also manages a Primary 2 form class. In addition, she is a CCA teacher for her school's international dance club, and teacher-in-charge of the Learning Support Programme and Chinese magazine.

Despite her busy work schedule, she makes time to connect with her students, chatting with them or simply offering a listening ear during recess breaks.

Miss Lau's ability to thrive in a demanding career can be attributed to the solid training she received.

After graduating from Singapore Polytechnic in 2014, she applied for the Ministry of Education Teaching Awards (MOE TA). She was then accepted into the Bachelor of Arts (Education) programme and Teaching Scholars Programme (TSP) at the National Institute of Education (NIE).

"I chose the BA(Ed) course and the TSP because I wanted a university education tailored to helping me grow and develop as a teacher," she says.

Joining the TSP's pioneer cohort enabled Miss Lau to interact with a close community of like-minded peers and supportive lecturers, and freely discuss ideas pertaining to pedagogy and classroom management. The programme also helped to develop her pedagogical skills and content mastery through academic research experiences, international practicums and overseas conferences.

Miss Lau is particularly grateful for the financial support she received from the MOE TA, which sponsored her tuition and hall accommodation fees.

Coming from a family that was not well-to-do, juggling studies and part-time work during her polytechnic days proved physically draining.

"The financial benefits of the scholarship freed me up to focus on personal and professional development during university, which was truly beneficial," she says.

Grateful for the support, Miss Lau now hopes to pay it forward and inspire the next generation.

Her most memorable teaching experience was helping a student, who had poor grasp of the Chinese language, express herself more confidently and show more interest in the language.

Such tiny triumphs keep her going.

"It is hugely satisfying to witness the growth of my students," says Miss Lau. "Their improvement in character, confidence or studies make me happy, knowing that I have helped them grow to be better people."

Climbing to the crow's nest

MPA scholarship helps hoist maritime enthusiast Loh Sin Yee to a vantage point for a better view of the industry



PHOTO: TED CHEN

BY NUR SYAHIIDAH ZAINAL

As a young girl, Ms Loh Sin Yee often went to the beach with her father.

But instead of building sandcastles or searching for seashells, the pair would spend hours ship-watching, identifying the various vessels anchored along the coastline.

That childhood interest in ships has since grown into a full-fledged appreciation for the maritime industry.

Ms Loh, 32, says: "As I grew older, I realised the importance of Singapore's maritime industry, which allows us to remain connected and relevant as an international trading hub. I was attracted to its diversity and buzz."

That led to her decision to pursue a Bachelor of Science in Maritime Studies at Nanyang Technological University (NTU) in 2005. Although she applied to several other organisations for a scholarship, she eventually decided on the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA) Undergraduate Scholarship.

"I believed the MPA scholarship would be the best starting point into the maritime sector, and I was excited to understand and challenge myself across the different functions that MPA takes on."

After graduating from NTU in 2009, Ms Loh kicked off her maritime career by joining MPA's planning division. Her role required her to monitor, analyse and benchmark the domestic, regional and international economic performance of the Singapore Maritime Cluster, based on indicators such as productivity and workforce dependency, before producing strategic plans that ensure long-term competitiveness.

She then moved on to its International Maritime Centre (IMC) division, which aims to build a vibrant maritime ecosystem in Singapore. As an account manager, Ms Loh had to engage with senior management from key international shipping groups to understand their business needs and help them set up their shipping operations here.

"The role definitely deepened my global perspectives and confidence in working with international partners," she says.

Bigger picture

In 2014, Ms Loh was appointed to the Public Service Leadership Programme. She moved to the Ministry of Transport (MOT), where for almost three years, she explored the possibilities of innovative disruptive technologies and how to best translate such technologies into national-level policies and strategies.

She says: "I led a joint project between MOT and PSA Corporation to develop and test an autonomous truck platooning system, which might be the answer to manpower constraint and improve efficiency in freight delivery."

She also spent two years at the Ministry of Social and Family Development, working on the third Enabling Masterplan.

Now back at MPA as a senior manager with the IMC, Ms Loh is set to drive the Sea Transport Industry Transformation Map through partnerships with both internal and external stakeholders.

One of the key areas she wants to focus on is supporting maritime enterprises as they digitalise and adopt digital solutions to be more productive — a challenging task as the diversity of the sea transport sector means there are various companies at different levels of readiness for technologies.

"We have to understand and experiment with our policies, initiatives and approaches in working with diverse stakeholders, who may face very different challenges, to help them digitalise."

> We have to understand and experiment with our policies, initiatives and approaches in working with diverse stakeholders, who may face very different challenges, to help them digitalise.
>
> MS LOH SIN YEE
> senior manager
> MPA

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"There are always different scenarios to handle and that's where the excitement is. My work takes me to train depots all over Singapore to do the testing and commissioning of Rolling Stock vehicles where I often have to exercise my technical judgment and make informed decisions on site."

Zulfadli Bin Abdul Latiff
Executive Project Engineer,
Rolling Stock Projects
LTA Undergraduate Scholarship
Nanyang Technological University
(Mechanical Engineering)

"I decided to take up an LTA scholarship because it offered me the prospect of applying my technical knowledge and skills to make a tangible, positive impact on our community, especially since public transportation is such a large part of people's everyday lives."

Luo Siyun
Senior Engineer,
Rail Design Development
LTA Undergraduate Scholarship
Carnegie Mellon University
(Civil & Environmental Engineering)

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A fulfilling journey of growth



PHOTO: TED CHEN

The PSC Local Merit Scholarship opened Mr Jackson Tan's doors to an exciting and diverse career path with the Immigration & Checkpoints Authority

BY RACHEL TAN

Today, Mr Jackson Tan may be interacting with the Immigration & Checkpoints Authority (ICA) officers and observing how passengers are being cleared at Changi Airport.

Tomorrow, he may be having meetings with various partners and stakeholders to brainstorm initiatives to improve airport operations.

For the deputy commander of ground operations in airport command at ICA, there is no such thing as a "typical work day". He is not only responsible for managing immigration-related operations in all terminals at Changi Airport, but he is also in charge of implementing projects to introduce more automation at immigration, while managing day-to-day operations at the airport.

However, Mr Tan's career experience extends far beyond his present duties. His journey with ICA began when he was awarded the PSC Local Merit Scholarship in 2001.

A holistic career

With the scholarship, he completed a Bachelor in Social Sciences in economics from the National University of Singapore in 2005.

To Mr Tan, public service offers a wide range of careers, each of which appeared interesting in its own right.

"In the end, I chose to serve in ICA as it offered a wide and interesting mix of jobs, ranging from checkpoint operations to policy roles," he says.

The 37-year-old cites his second posting — to Airport Command — in 2007 as the one he enjoyed the most. As a young officer, he led a team of 18 ICA officers at Changi Airport Terminal 1 Departure.

> I had to lead my team decisively in operations but also display my analytical capabilities in a policy role. I was able to exercise my relationship building skills in international relations too.
>
> MR JACKSON TAN
> deputy commander
> ICA

He got to see travellers from all corners of the world, but also had to learn and understand different security challenges that different travellers posed, ranging from immigration offences to more serious crimes and even terrorism.

In 2010, he took off his operational "hat" to deal with challenges from a border and transport security policy perspective after being seconded to ICA's parent ministry, the Ministry of Home Affairs.

And in 2012, he was attached to Singapore's Permanent Mission to the United Nations General Assembly. There, he negotiated on resolutions that covered migration issues.

The many different career opportunities meant that the scholar had to be dynamic and versatile, constantly reinventing himself and flexing different sets of competencies and attributes according to his postings.

He says: "I had to lead my team decisively in operations but also display my analytical capabilities in a policy role. I was able to exercise my relationship building skills in international relations too."

In 2017, the deputy commander was also able to further his studies with the support of ICA. He now holds a Master of Business Administration degree from the University of Oxford, which equips him with more knowledge in management and leadership.

Ultimately, the breadth of learning opportunities remains the highlight of Mr Tan's career with ICA.

Thirteen years after entering the organisation, he continues to look forward to his next posting, which promises to introduce new experiences and insights.

"The job constantly pulls me out of my comfort zone, and helps me become a better person and well-rounded officer."

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Head, Administration
ISEAS – Yusof Ishak Institute
30 Heng Mui Keng Terrace
Singapore 119614
Tel No: 67780955, Fax No: 67756264

Closing Date: 5 February 2019

Only shortlisted candidates will be notified

This scholarship is funded by the Tun Dato Sir Cheng-Lock Tan Trust Fund, Singapore

Up close and personal

Journalist Ms Yeo Chun Hing loves her job because she gets to witness history — and write about it

BY NUR SYAHIIDAH ZAINAL



PHOTO: TED CHEN

For Ms Yeo Chun Hing, 27, being a journalist means getting a front-row seat to historic world events as they unfold.

As a NewsHub journalist with Singapore Press Holdings' Chinese Media Group, Ms Yeo covers the political and housing beats for both Lianhe Zaobao and Lianhe Wanbao.

At the 2018 North Korea–United States summit in June, Lianhe Zaobao was one of the few media outlets that was given access to the event at its Capella Hotel location, and she was tasked to cover it.

Ms Yeo says: "When it came to the official handshake, as journalists, we were so busy covering every detail, such as what they said or their micro-expressions, that it was difficult to recognise at that moment the magnitude of what we were witnessing."

"It was only much later, after everything settled down, that it hits you — that it was a historic moment that you just witnessed," she adds.

Her desire to write for a Chinese newspaper was strengthened after she completed her first year at China's Peking University, where she pursued a double degree in Chinese language and literature and international relations. Ms Yeo also had a clear idea of where she wanted to work.

She says: "I wanted to report on news responsibly, so that readers can have a clear understanding of the issues of the day. I felt that SPH provides adequate resources in this area. They also have a pool of senior journalists with the relevant experience who we can learn from."

That led to her applying for and receiving the SPH Mid-Term Scholarship, which she recommends due to its flexible nature of allowing recipients to pursue most fields of study, and the abundance of internship opportunities.

She says: "You wouldn't be coming in blind. Even before you are offered the scholarship, you have to go through an internship, which will allow both you and the company to know if you are a good fit."

To succeed at being a journalist, Ms Yeo thinks that a sense of curiosity is essential. Instead of taking things at face value, she stresses the importance of exploring issues at a deeper level, and presenting them in a way that would best connect with people, because "only then would you have good stories".

Another quality she deems important is a sense of empathy, and the ability to stand in other people's shoes, to understand how best to convey their concerns and viewpoints.

"Not everyone is eloquent, so it is important to listen well and really understand what they are trying to say because sometimes, you have to help them to put their thoughts into words," she says.

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GUIDE TO SCHOLARSHIPS

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ORGANISATION	COURSE/ UNIVERSITIES/ COUNTRY OF STUDY	VALUE OF AWARD AND BOND	REQUIREMENTS
AGENCY FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND RESEARCH (A*STAR)			
A*STAR Undergraduate Scholarship (AUS)	• Biomedical Sciences • Physical Sciences & Engineering NTU, NUS including the Yale-NUS College, SUTD, SMU (School of Information Systems)	Successful Applicants will be provided with financial support* for the duration of their undergraduate studies covering: • Tuition fees • Hostel Fees • Monthly allowance • Research attachment opportunities at A*STAR Research Institutes • One overseas exchange programme during their undergraduate studies (up to 6 months) Mid-term AUS awardees will be offered the same terms of support as the direct AUS scholars from the point of the award, without retrospective payment. *All rates/allowances are subject to A*STAR adjustments from time to time* **Bond Duration:** Nil AUS scholars are required to embark on and complete a PhD programme in Science or Engineering disciplines after the completion of their undergraduate studies. AUS scholars may apply to the National Science Scholarship, A*STAR Graduate Scholarship or other scholarships in their final year of undergraduate studies.	• Applicants who have achieved excellent academic standing in the GCE 'A' Levels (preferably with 11 AUs), polytechnic diploma (preferably with Merit) or equivalent qualifications (e.g. International Baccalaureate or NUS High School diploma) • Applicants must be Singaporean; those of other nationalities must intend to take up Singapore citizenship • Applicants should have keen interest in science and research Applicants in undergraduate Year 2 and above must be Singaporean and should have: • Completed at least 2 terms of studies with graded results • Obtained a term CAP/GPA and CAP/cumulative GPA of at least 4.50 in the latest academic term/ year *The above eligibility criteria are not exhaustive.* *A*STAR may include additional selection criteria based on prevailing scholarship policies. These policies may be amended from time to time without notice.*
National Science Scholarship (BS-PhD)	• Biomedical Sciences • Physical Sciences & Engineering Top Global Universities	The National Science Scholarship (BS-PhD) supports up to 8 years of undergraduate and PhD studies. Successful NSS (BS) applicants will be given support* for their undergraduate studies, comprising: • Full tuition fees • Monthly allowance • Annual return airfare • Pre-studies allowance • Research attachment opportunities at A*STAR Research Institutes Further support for PhD studies will be awarded upon satisfactory completion of undergraduate studies and meeting NSS (PhD) requirements (e.g. 1-year research attachment at an A*STAR Research Institute). **Rates/allowances vary according to country and university, and are subject to adjustments by A*STAR from time to time* NSS (BS) awardees are required to fulfill a 6-year service commitment comprising: • A compulsory 1-year research attachment at an A*STAR research institute between the BS and PhD studies • 5 years at an A*STAR research institute upon completion of PhD studies	• Applicants who have achieved excellent academic standing in the GCE 'A' Levels (preferably with 11 AUs), polytechnic diploma (preferably with Merit) or equivalent qualifications (e.g. International Baccalaureate or NUS High School diploma) • Applicants must be Singaporean; those of other nationalities must intend to take up Singapore citizenship • Applicants should have keen interest in science and research *The above eligibility criteria are not exhaustive.* *A*STAR may include additional selection criteria based on prevailing scholarship policies. These policies may be amended from time to time without notice.*
A*STAR Graduate Scholarship	• Biomedical Sciences • Physical Sciences & Engineering Duke-NUS, NTU, NUS, SUTD, SMU (School of Information Systems)	Successful applicants will be given support* for up to 4 years of academic pursuit. They will receive: • Full tuition fees • Monthly sustenance allowance, inclusive of CPF contribution (where applicable) Other allowances including: • Book allowance • Computer allowance • Conference allowance • Thesis allowance • Support for up to 12 months of overseas attachment **All rates/allowances are subject to adjustments by A*STAR from time to time.* AGS scholars are eligible for up to 2 years of post-doctoral fellowship under AGS (PDF). Singaporeans (at point of award): No service commitment Non-Singaporeans (at point of award): 2 years in a Singapore-based organisation preferably in Biomedical Sciences, Physical Sciences and Engineering AGS awardees who are subsequently awarded the AGS (PDF) for overseas post-doctoral training: 3 years	• Applicants must satisfy criteria for and seek admission into NTU, NUS, Duke-NUS, SMU (Information Systems) and SUTD PhD programme • Applicants must have obtained at least a 2nd Upper Class Honours Degree or equivalent in relevant disciplines • Applicants must be Singaporean; those of other nationalities must intend to take up Singapore citizenship • Applicants should have strong interest in a research career • Applicants may submit GRE scores (if available) to be included in the overall assessment of their scholarship application *The above eligibility criteria are not exhaustive.* *A*STAR may include additional selection criteria based on prevailing scholarship policies. These policies may be amended from time to time without notice.*
A*STAR Computing And Information Science (ACIS) Scholarship	• Computing and Information Science NTU, NUS, SUTD, SMU	Successful applicants will be given support* for up to 4 years of academic pursuit. They will receive: • Full tuition fees • Monthly sustenance allowance and CPF contribution (where applicable) based on the prevailing employer's contribution rate^ Monthly Sustenance Allowance • For Singapore Citizens: S$5,000 • For Singapore Permanent Citizens^: S$4,000 • For Non-Singapore Citizens^: S$3,750 Other allowances including: • Book allowance • Computer allowance • Conference allowance • Miscellaneous allowance • Thesis allowance • Support for up to 12 months of overseas attachment Singaporeans (at the point of award): No service commitment. Non-Singaporeans (at the point of award): 2-year service in Singapore-based companies^ without commitment to any specific organization. The area of work should preferably be in CIS disciplines. ^ Singapore-based companies refer to local companies and international companies that have a base in Singapore and which is registered with the Accounting & Corporate Regulatory Authority (ACRA).	• Applicants must satisfy the criteria for and gain admission to a PhD programme* in one of the following schools: - NTU School of Computer Science and Engineering - NUS School of Computing - SMU School of Information Systems - SUTD Information Systems Technology and Design Pillar • Applicants must have obtained at least a 2nd Upper Class Honours Degree or equivalent in a relevant discipline • Applicants must be Singaporeans and other nationals intending to take up Singapore citizenship • Applicants must have strong interest to pursue a CIS research career in industry R&D labs, technology enterprises, spin-off companies and/or academia • Applicants may submit GRE scores (if available) to be included in the overall assessment of their scholarship application. *Applicants for thematic programmes who are applying for or have gained admission to schools/ departments other than the 4 specified CIS schools may be considered for the ACIS Scholarship if their PhD project is in CIS, on a case-by-case basis. Thematic Programmes: • Artificial Intelligence & Deep Learning (I2R) • Big Data Analytics (I2R) • Complex Systems (SIMTech) • Industrial Internet of Things (I2R) • Video & Image Analytics (I2R) *The above eligibility criteria are not exhaustive.* *A*STAR may include additional selection criteria based on prevailing scholarship policies. These policies may be amended from time to time without notice.*
National Science Scholarship (PhD)	• Biomedical Sciences • Physical Sciences & Engineering Top Global Universities	Successful applicants will be given support for up to five years of PhD studies comprising*: • Full tuition fees • Monthly sustenance allowance, inclusive of CPF contribution (where applicable) • Monthly overseas living allowance • Annual return airfare Other allowances including: • Conference allowance • Thesis allowance • Book allowance • Computer allowance • Warm clothing and settling-in allowance **All rates/allowances vary according to country and university, and are subject to adjustments made by A*STAR.** **Bond Duration:** 4 years	• Applicants must have outstanding undergraduate results (preferably 1st Class Honours Degree or equivalent) in relevant disciplines. • Applicants must be Singaporean; those of other nationalities must intend to take up Singapore citizenship • Applicants should have strong interest in a research career • Applicants should have applied or be applying for a PhD programme in biomedical sciences, physical sciences or engineering at a top global university • Applicants must sit for the Graduate Record Exam (GRE) prior to, or during the course of their application, and obtain minimum scores as follows: - Combined Verbal & Quantitative – 322 - Analytical Writing – 4.5 • Successful applicants are required to undergo a one-year research attachment at an A*STAR research institute prior to their PhD studies *The above eligibility criteria are not exhaustive.* *A*STAR may include additional selection criteria based on prevailing scholarship policies. These policies may be amended from time to time without notice.*
For more information on other scholarships such as A*STAR-University Of Warwick (AWP) EngD Partnership, please visit https://www.a-star.edu.sg/Scholarships/For-Graduate-Studies/A-STAR-University-of-Warwick-AWP-EngD-Partnership			
CIVIL AVIATION AUTHORITY OF SINGAPORE (CAAS)			
CAAS Overseas Undergraduate Scholarship	All disciplines of study except Medicine and Dentistry Note: Scholars may pursue a Law degree but will not be employed as practising lawyers during their service with CAAS Renowned overseas universities	• Tuition and compulsory fees • Allowance (covering pre-studies, computer and maintenance) • Additional sponsorships will be given for student exchange and summer studies programme • Full postgraduate sponsorship upon approval by management • Compulsory internships are provided to allow scholars to gain insights into the civil aviation industry Return airfares for Overseas Scholars returning for internships with CAAS **Bond Duration:** 6 years *Note: Bond period will be pro-rated for first, second and third year university undergraduate applicants*	• Applicants must be a Singapore Citizen or Singapore Permanent Resident who is willing to take up Singapore Citizenship • Excellent GCE 'A' Level results or equivalent, including International Baccalaureate, NUS High Diploma and Polytechnic (Diploma with Merit); university results • Outstanding CCA records and proven leadership and high achiever qualities • Current undergraduates with excellent results, on track to graduate with at least Second-Upper Class Honours or equivalent will also be considered
CAAS Local Undergraduate Scholarship	All disciplines of study except Medicine and Dentistry Note: Scholars may pursue a Law degree but will not be employed as practising lawyers during their service with CAAS NUS, NTU, SMU, SUTD, SUSS and SIT leading to a good Honours degree	• Tuition and compulsory fees • Allowance (covering computer and maintenance) • Additional sponsorships will be given for student exchange and summer studies programme • Full postgraduate sponsorship upon approval by management • Compulsory internships are provided to allow scholars to gain insights into the civil aviation industry **Bond Duration:** 4 years *Note: Bond period will be pro-rated for first, second and third year university undergraduate applicants*	• Applicants must be a Singapore Citizen or Singapore Permanent Resident who is willing to take up Singapore Citizenship • Excellent GCE 'A' Level results or equivalent, including International Baccalaureate, NUS High Diploma and Polytechnic (Diploma with Merit); university results • Outstanding CCA records and proven leadership and high achiever qualities • Current undergraduates with excellent results, on track to graduate with at least Second-Upper Class Honours or equivalent will also be considered
ISEAS-YUSOF ISHAK INSTITUTE			
TUN DATO SIR CHENG-LOCK TAN M.A. SCHOLARSHIP	• Southeast Asian Studies • Political Science • International Relations • Economics • Sociology • Anthropology • History • Geography • Archaeology/Archaeological Science, and other relevant subjects Univerisity: reputable universities overseas or in Singapore	• Tuition and other compulsory fees • Monthly maintenance allowance • Other preliminary expenses (i.e. visa application, immigration health surcharge, courier services etc.) • Fieldwork allowance (inclusive of conferences) • Medical Insurance • Return Air passage (if applicable) **Bond Duration:** Successful candidates will serve a one-year bond with ISEAS following the completion of their studies	Candidates should: (a) Be Singapore citizens or permanent residents (b) Be in possession of a good honours degree (or professional qualifications of equivalent standing in a relevant subject (c) Have a consistently good academic record and (d) Be prepared to take up courses and/or carry out research on Southeast Asia
LAND TRANSPORT AUTHORITY (LTA)			
LTA Local/Overseas Undergraduate Scholarship (Full-term & Mid-term)	• Civil Engineering • Electrical & Electronic Engineering • Mechanical Engineering • Systems Engineering • Environmental Engineering • Computer Engineering • Accountancy • Economics / Geography / Mass Communications • Science (Computer Science / IT Security & Communications / Data Analytics, Materials Science) Local and Overseas Institutions	LTA Scholars will undergo a well-structured learning and development programme that includes postings to various divisions for exposure to different areas of work. **Local Award includes:** • Tuition and Compulsory Fees • Maintenance Allowance • Pre-Studies Allowance (for Full-term only) • Sponsorship of up to one approved exchange programme/ summer school • Additional sponsorship of Masters studies (upon approval) **Overseas Award includes:** • Tuition and Compulsory Fees • Maintenance Allowance • Return Airfare • Pre-studies Allowance (for Full-term only) • Sponsorship of up to one approved exchange programme/ summer school • Additional sponsorship of Masters studies (upon approval)	• Singapore Citizen or Singapore Permanent Resident intending to take up a Singapore Citizenship • Outstanding GCE 'O' & 'A' Level / NUS High / International Baccalaureate (IB) / Diploma Results • Outstanding University results (for current undergraduates) • Good CCA track record

GUIDE TO SCHOLARSHIPS

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ORGANISATION	COURSE/ UNIVERSITIES/ COUNTRY OF STUDY	VALUE OF AWARD AND BOND	REQUIREMENTS
LTA Overseas Undergraduate Scholarship (Non-English speaking countries)	• Civil Engineering • Electrical & Electronic Engineering • Mechanical Engineering Overseas Institutions	LTA Scholars will undergo a well-structured learning and development programme that includes postings to various divisions for exposure to different areas of work. **Overseas Award includes:** • Tuition and Compulsory Fees • Maintenance Allowance • Language Support Program • Return Airfare • Pre-studies Allowance • Sponsorship of up to one approved exchange programme/ summer school • Preparatory programme in country of study • Masters sponsorship upon approval	• Singapore Citizen or Singapore Permanent Resident intending to take up a Singapore Citizenship • Outstanding GCE 'O' & 'A' Level / NUS High / International Baccalaureate (IB) / Diploma Results • Good CCA track record
LTA Local Study Award (Full-term / Mid-term)	• Civil Engineering • Electrical & Electronic Engineering • Mechanical Engineering NUS, NTU, SUTD and SIT	Study Award recipients can look forward to developing their engineering career to become future engineering experts in LTA. **Local Award includes:** • Tuition and Compulsory Fees • Study Allowance	• Singapore Citizen or Singapore Permanent Resident intending to take up a Singapore Citizenship • Good GCE 'O' Level and 'A' Level / Diploma / NUS High / International Baccalaureate (IB) results • Good University results in NUS / NTU (for current undergraduates) • Good CCA track record
MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (MHA)			
The Singapore Police Force Scholarship (SPFS) is one of the most prestigious scholarships awarded by the Public Service Commission. SPFS is awarded to candidates who have shown outstanding academic performance and leadership qualities, with a strong desire to serve in the Singapore Police Force.	Most disciplines except Medicine, Dentistry and Architecture *Applicants intending to pursue a degree in Law will not be called to the Bar Renowned Overseas or Local Universities	• Tuition and other approved fees • Monthly overseas or local maintenance allowance • Pre-studies allowance e.g. settling-in, warm clothing, computer • Return airfare for attachment programme • Sponsorship for Masters and exchange programmes (if requirements are met) • Full salary for the duration of study • National Service Disruption **Bond Duration:** • 6 years bond (English speaking countries) • 5 years bond (Non-English speaking countries)	• Singapore citizens or Permanent Residents intending to take up Singapore Citizenship • Good co-curricular activities (CCA) records and Physical Fitness (PES A or B) • GCE 'A' Levels (with at least 10 academic units), International Baccalaureate (IB), Polytechnic Diploma (with Merit) or equivalent • Display strong leadership qualities and excel in Officer Cadet School (OCS) • Keen interest in a career with the SPF
Singapore Merit Scholarship (SMS)	Most disciplines except Medicine, Dentistry and Architecture *Applicants intending to pursue a degree in Law will not be called to the Bar Renowned Overseas or Local Universities	• Tuition and other approved fees • Monthly overseas or local maintenance allowance • Pre-studies allowance e.g. settling-in, warm clothing, computer • Return airfare for attachment programme • Sponsorship for Masters and exchange programmes (if requirements are met) • Full salary for the duration of study • National Service Disruption **Bond Duration:** • 6 years bond (English speaking countries) • 5 years bond (Non-English speaking countries)	• Singapore citizens or Permanent Residents intending to take up Singapore Citizenship • Good co-curricular activities (CCA) records and Physical Fitness (PES A or B) • GCE 'A' Levels (with at least 10 academic units), International Baccalaureate (IB), Polytechnic Diploma (with Merit) or equivalent • Display strong leadership qualities and excel in Officer Cadet School (OCS) • Keen interest in a career with the Home Team
Singapore Government Scholarship (SGS)	Most disciplines except Medicine, Dentistry and Architecture *Applicants intending to pursue a degree in Law will not be called to the Bar Renowned Overseas or Local Universities	• Tuition and other approved fees • Monthly overseas or local maintenance allowance • Pre-studies allowance e.g. settling-in, warm clothing, computer • Return airfare for attachment programme • Sponsorship for exchange programmes (if requirements are met) **Bond Duration:** • 6 years bond (English speaking countries) • 5 years bond (Non-English speaking countries)	• Singapore citizens or Permanent Residents intending to take up Singapore Citizenship • Good co-curricular activities (CCA) records and Physical Fitness (PES A or B) • GCE 'A' Levels (with at least 10 academic units), International Baccalaureate (IB), Polytechnic Diploma (with Merit) or equivalent • Good performance in National Service • Keen interest in a career with the Home Team
SCDF Paramedic Scholarship	Para-medicine or related disciplines in Emergency Health or Clinical Practice Renowned Overseas Universities	• Tuition and other approved fees • Monthly overseas or local maintenance allowance • Pre-studies allowance e.g. settling-in, warm clothing, computer • Return airfare for attachment programme • Sponsorship for exchange programmes (if requirements are met) **Bond Duration:** • 6 years bond (English speaking countries) • 5 years bond (Non-English speaking countries)	• Singapore citizens or Permanent Residents intending to take up Singapore Citizenship • Good co-curricular activities (CCA) records and Physical Fitness (PES A or B) • GCE 'A' Levels (with at least 10 academic units), International Baccalaureate (IB), Polytechnic Diploma (with Merit) or equivalent • Good performance in National Service • Keen interest in a career with the SCDF
Home Team Science and Technology Scholarship	Science and Engineering Disciplines Science Disciplines : Biology, Biochemistry, Biotechnology, Chemistry, Computer Science & Physics Engineering Disciplines : Computer Science & Engineering, Electrical & Electronics Engineering Renowned Overseas or Local Universities	• Tuition and other approved fees • Monthly overseas or local maintenance allowance • Pre-studies allowance e.g. settling-in, warm clothing, computer • Return airfare for attachment programme • Sponsorship for exchange programmes (if requirements are met) **Bond Duration:** • 6 years bond (English speaking countries) • 5 years bond (Non-English speaking countries)	• Singapore citizens or Permanent Residents intending to take up Singapore Citizenship • Good co-curricular activities (CCA) records and Physical Fitness (PES A or B) • GCE 'A' Levels (with at least 10 academic units), International Baccalaureate (IB), Polytechnic Diploma (with Merit) or equivalent • Good performance in National Service • Keen interest in a career with the Singapore Police Force with deep specialisation in science, technology and engineering
For more information on other scholarships such as Local Merit Scholarship (LMS) and Home Team Local Study Award (HTLSA), please visit https://www.mha.gov.sg/join-mha/scholarships-awards			
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION (MOE)			
Public Service Commission Scholarship (Teaching Service)	• Languages • Humanities • Art and Music • Physical Education and Sports Science • Social Sciences • Sciences • Mathematics Reputable overseas universities, local autonomous universities, or NTU-NIE	• Sponsorship of tuition fees and other approved charges • Maintenance and pre-studies allowance • Return economy airfare (for overseas studies only) • Developmental programmes during undergraduate studies (e.g. school attachment and HQ internship) • Opportunities to participate in overseas school attachment • Sponsorship of approved student exchange programmes, summer programmes and CCAs • Possibility of sponsorship of Master's degree (if requirements are met) • Be enrolled into the Postgraduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) teacher preparation programme at the National Institute of Education (NIE) as a salaried employee, after completion of first degree **Bond Duration:** • English speaking countries: 6 years • Non-English speaking countries: 5 years • Local: 4 years	• Singapore Citizens, or Singapore Permanent Residents who take up Singapore citizenship before embarking on studies • Good character, outstanding leadership qualities and keen passion for education • Excellent Co-Curricular Activities (CCA) records • Excellent interpersonal and communication skills • GCE 'A' Levels (with minimum 10 academic units), International Baccalaureate (IB), Polytechnic Diploma, NUS High Diploma or equivalent
Education Merit Scholarship (EMS)	• Languages • Humanities • Art and Music • Physical Education and Sports Science • Social Sciences • Sciences • Mathematics Reputable overseas universities, local autonomous universities, or NTU-NIE	• Sponsorship of tuition fees and other approved charges • Maintenance and pre-studies allowance • Return economy airfare (for overseas studies only) • Developmental programmes during undergraduate studies (e.g. school attachment and HQ internship) • Opportunities to participate in overseas school attachment • Sponsorship of approved student exchange programmes, summer programmes and CCAs • Possibility of sponsorship of Master's degree (if requirements are met) • Be enrolled into the Postgraduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) teacher preparation programme at the National Institute of Education (NIE) as a salaried employee, after completion of first degree **Bond Duration:** • English speaking countries: 6 years • Non-English speaking countries: 5 years • Local: 4 years	• Singapore Citizens, or Singapore Permanent Residents who take up Singapore citizenship before embarking on studies • Good character, strong leadership qualities and keen passion for education • Strong Co-Curricular Activities (CCA) records • Excellent interpersonal and communication skills • GCE 'A' Levels (with minimum 10 academic units), International Baccalaureate (IB), Polytechnic Diploma, NUS High Diploma or equivalent
MOE Teaching Scholarship (MOE TS)	• Languages • Humanities • Art and Music • Physical Education and Sports Science • Social Sciences • Sciences • Mathematics Reputable overseas universities, local autonomous universities, or NTU-NIE	• Sponsorship of tuition fees and other approved charges • Maintenance and pre-studies allowance • Return economy airfare (for overseas studies only) • Developmental programmes during undergraduate studies (e.g. school attachment) • Sponsorship of approved student exchange programmes, summer programmes and CCAs • Possibility of sponsorship of Master's degree (if requirements are met) • Be enrolled into the Postgraduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) teacher preparation programme at the National Institute of Education (NIE) as a salaried employee, after completion of first degree **Bond Duration:** • English speaking countries: 6 years • Non-English speaking countries: 5 years • Local: 4 years	• Singapore Citizens, or Singapore Permanent Residents who take up Singapore citizenship before embarking on studies • Good character, strong leadership qualities and keen passion for education • Good Co-Curricular Activities (CCA) records • Excellent interpersonal and communication skills • GCE 'A' Levels (with minimum 10 academic units), International Baccalaureate (IB), Polytechnic Diploma, NUS High Diploma or equivalent
MOE Teaching Award (MOE TA)	• Languages • Humanities • Art and Music • Physical Education and Sports Science • Social Sciences • Sciences • Mathematics Reputable local autonomous universities or NTU-NIE	**'A' level or equivalent/ Polytechnic Diploma Holders, Year 1 and Year 2 undergraduates** • Sponsorship of tuition fees and other approved charges • Maintenance allowance • Developmental programmes during undergraduate studies (e.g. school attachment) • Sponsorship of approved student exchange programmes, summer programmes and CCAs • Be enrolled into the Postgraduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) teacher preparation programme at the National Institute of Education (NIE) as a salaried employee, after completion of first degree **Year 3 undergraduates (for those proceeding to Honours with at least two academic semesters left at the point of application)** • Sponsorship of tuition fees and other approved charges • Maintenance allowance • Developmental programmes during undergraduate studies (e.g. school attachment) • Sponsorship of approved summer programmes and CCAs • $6000 paid in 2 tranches (if the undergraduate is proceeding for his/her Honours year of study in the following semester at the point of award) • Be enrolled into the Postgraduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) teacher preparation programme at the National Institute of Education (NIE) as a salaried employee, after completion of first degree	'A' Level or equivalent/ Polytechnic Diploma Holders • Good character, keen passion for teaching • Good Co-Curricular Activities (CCA) records • Good interpersonal and communication skills • Good 'A' Level or equivalent/Polytechnic results or equivalent (e.g. International Baccalaureate, NUS High Diploma) • 'A' level candidates should offer at least 10 academic units • Qualify for entry into a local autonomous university **Year 1 or Year 2 undergraduates pursuing courses in the local autonomous universities** • Good character, keen passion for teaching • Good Co-Curricular Activities (CCA) records • Good interpersonal and communication skills • Good university results • Reading relevant teaching subjects at university **Year 3 undergraduates pursuing courses in the local autonomous universities** • Good character, keen passion for teaching • Good Co-Curricular Activities (CCA) records • Good interpersonal and communication skills • Good university results • Reading relevant teaching subjects at university and proceeding to Honours with at least two academic semesters left at the point of application
MOH HOLDINGS (MOHH) **SINGAPORE PUBLIC HEALTHCARE SECTOR: - MINISTRY OF HEALTH - NATIONAL HEALTHCARE GROUP - NATIONAL UNIVERSITY HEALTH SYSTEM - SINGAPORE HEALTH SERVICES** All Healthcare Scholarships are centrally awarded and managed by MOH Holdings (MOHH) on behalf of the Singapore Public Healthcare Sector.			
Healthcare Merit Award (HMA)	• Diagnostic Radiography • Dietetics • Medical Social Work • Nursing • Occupational Therapy • Orthoptics • Pharmacy • Physiotherapy • Podiatry • Prosthetics and Orthotics • Radiation Therapy • Respiratory Therapy • Speech Therapy **Overseas:** Reputable universities in Australia, UK (for selected disciplines) and US (for Respiratory Therapy only) **Local:** National University of Singapore (for Pharmacy, Nursing and Social Work) Singapore Institute of Technology (for Dietetics, Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy , Diagnostic Radiography, Radiation Therapy and Nursing)	**Overseas** • Tuition fees and other approved charges • Monthly maintenance allowance • Pre-studies allowance (for warm clothing, settling-in, computer) • Return economy airfare • Sponsorship for MOHH approved student exchange programmes, seminars and conferences • Developmental programmes during course of study such as vacation attachments in Singapore healthcare institutions • Commencement award • Distinction award (for scholars who graduate with at least Second Class (Upper) Honours or equivalent) **Local** • Tuition fees and other approved charges • Monthly maintenance allowance • Pre-studies allowance (settling-in, computer) • Hostel fees (if applicable) • Sponsorship for MOHH approved student exchange programmes, seminars and conferences • Commencement award • Distinction award (for scholars who graduate with at least Second Class (Upper) Honours or equivalent) **Bond Duration:** • Overseas Studies: 6 years • Local Studies: 4 years	• Singapore Citizens or Permanent Residents intending to take up Singapore Citizenship • Keen passion to make a difference in public healthcare • Strong people and communication skills • Good GCE 'A' Level results (with at least 10 academic units), Polytechnic results or equivalent (e.g. IB Diploma or High School Diploma) • Good CCA records

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ORGANISATION	COURSE/ UNIVERSITIES/ COUNTRY OF STUDY	VALUE OF AWARD AND BOND	REQUIREMENTS
Healthcare Administration Scholarship (HAS)	All disciplines such as Business, Accountancy, Economics **except** for Medicine, Dentistry and other healthcare related disciplines. • Nanyang Technological University (NTU) • National University of Singapore (NUS) • Singapore Institute of Technology (SIT) • Singapore Management University (SMU) • Singapore University of Social Sciences (SUSS) • Singapore University of Technology and Design (SUTD) • Overseas Universities (only applicable for SgIS mid-term applicants)	• Tuition and compulsory fees • Monthly allowance • Pre-study allowance • Sponsorship for MOHH approved development programmes **Bond Duration:** **Full-Term Scholarship** 3 years bond for studies at SIT 4 years bond for studies at NUS/NTU/SMU/SUSS/SUTD **Mid-Term Scholarship** 2 years bond for local studies 3 years bond for overseas studies	• Singapore Citizen • Have excellent A level results or relevant diploma results or equivalent qualifications • Current undergraduates should have outstanding academic results, expecting to graduate with at least Second Class (Upper) Honours or equivalent • Have good co-curricular activities record and strong leadership qualities • Have a passion for public healthcare and excellent communication skills
Healthcare Graduate Studies Award (HGSA)* *Post-Graduate Scholarship	• Audiology • Biostatistics • Business Analytics • Clinical Psychology • Epidemiology • Health Economics • Medical Informatics • Public Health • Speech Therapy Master's degree in selected health science disciplines from MOHH approved local or overseas university	• Tuition and compulsory fees • Monthly allowance • Pre-study allowance (for overseas study only) • Return economy airfare (for overseas study only) • Sponsorship for approved development programmes **Bond Duration:** **Local:** 2 years bond (for course duration of up to 12 months) 3 years bond (for course duration of more than 12 months, capped at 24 months) **Overseas:** 3 years bond (for course duration up to 12 months) 4 years (for course duration more than 12 months, capped at 24 months)	• Singapore Citizen or Permanent Resident who will take up Singapore citizenship before embarking on studies • Have a good university degree (Second Class (Upper) Honours or equivalent) • Have a good track record of work achievements (if applicable) • Have good co-curricular activities record and strong leadership qualities • Have a passion for public healthcare and posess excellent communication skills
Community Nursing Scholarship (CNS)* *CNS will cover nursing diploma and/ or degree studies in local educational institutions, as well as local post-registration nursing degree studies."	• Nursing • Nanyang Polytechnic (NYP) • Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP) • Alice Lee Centre for Nursing under National University of Singapore (NUS) applicable only for 4 year nursing course • Singapore Institute of Technology (SIT) 19 month nursing post registration studies • MOHH approved overseas universities 1 year nursing post registration studies	• Tuition and compulsory charges • Monthly allowance* • Pre-studies allowance* • Salaries for nurses undertaking post-registration degree studies with more than one year of experience in the community setting • Return economy airfare (for overseas studies only) • Sponsorship for MOHH approved developmental programmes • Commencement award* • Distinction award (for scholars who graduate with at least Second Class (Upper) Honours or equivalent) *Existing nursing students receiving the CNS will receive full funding support, which includes tuition fees and monthly allowance from the point of award, as well as a back payment of tuition fees (excluding monthly allowance) from the first year of study. Pre-studies allowance and commencement award are not applicable. Bond computation for these mid-term scholarship recipients is the same as that for full-term **Bond Duration:** For 'O' Level Graduates • Diploma (NYP/NP) + Local Degree (SIT): 3 years bond OR • Diploma (NYP/NP) + MOHH-approved Overseas Post-Registration Degree: 3 years bond 'A' Level Graduates or Polytechnic Diploma Holders or equivalent qualifications (eg. International Baccalaureate (IB) or high school diploma) • Local Degree (NUS): 4 years bond Existing Nurses seeking Degree Conversion • Local Degree (SIT): 3 years bond • MOHH-approved Overseas Post-Registration Degree: 3 years bond	• Singapore Citizen or Permanent Resident who will take up Singapore citizenship before embarking on his/her studies • Possess good academic results, co-curricular activities record and communication skills • Be applying to take up nursing studies in local educational institutions (NYP, NP, NUS or SIT) or a post-registration nursing degree programme in MOHH-approved local or overseas universities; or Be a current nursing student in local educational institution (NYP, NP, NUS or SIT) • Have a strong interest to serve in the community and possess leadership qualities
Integrated Nursing Scholarship (INS)	• Nursing 3-year nursing diploma scholarship with advancement to either of the following degree options: • 19-month SIT nursing degree scholarship • 1-year degree scholarship at reputable overseas universities	• Tuition and compulsory fees • Monthly allowances • Pre-studies allowance • Sponsorship for MOHH approved student exchange programmes, seminars and conferences • Commencement award • Distinction award (for scholars who graduate with a least Second Class (Upper) Honours or equivalent) **Bond Duration:** 3 years bond (for Diploma (NYP/NP) + Local Degree (SIT) studies OR Diploma (NYP/NP) + MOHH-approved Overseas Post-Registration Degree)	• Singapore Citizen • Have applied to the nursing course at Nanyang Polytechnic or Ngee Ann Polytechnic • Have outstanding GCE 'O' level results of L1R2B2 of 10 points and below • Have good co-curricular activities record and strong leadership qualities • Have a passion for nursing and possess excellent communication skills
For more information on our scholarships such as Mid-Term Healthcare Scholarship, Degree Conversion Healthcare Scholarship, Healthcare Graduate Studies Award Nursing, please visit http://www.healthcarescholarships.sg/			
MARITIME AND PORT AUTHORITY OF SINGAPORE (MPA)			
MPA Local/Overseas Undergraduate Scholarship	Most disciplines (except Medicine, Dentistry, Pharmacy, Law and Architecture). Some examples of courses that are of direct relevance to MPA's work: • Civil Engineering • Computer Engineering • Computer Science • Data Analytics • Economics • Statistics • Information Systems • International Relations • Marine Engineering • Maritime Business • Mathemetics • Naval Architecture • Political Science • Any other related courses	• Tuition and other compulsory fees • Monthly maintenance allowance • Other allowance e.g. computer and book allowance • Opportunity for sponsorship of approved student exchange/summer school programme • Internship opportunties before and during studies for exposure to the culture of and work in MPA as well as gain insights into the maritime industry **Bond Duration:** • Overseas: 6 years • Local: 4 years	• Singapore Citizens or Permanent Residents (PRs) • Excellent results for GCE 'A' Levels, International Baccalaureate (IB) or equivalent, or Polytechnic Diploma with Merit • Good CCA track records • Undergraduates with good university results may also apply
NANYANG TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY (NTU)			
Renaissance Engineering Programme Scholarship	Successful awardees should read a full-time undergraduate Renaissance Engineering Programme (REP) at NTU.	• Full coverage of subsidised tuition fees (after tuition grant). - Living allowance of S$6,000 per academic year for all years except in year 3. Allowances for year 3 will be determined by REP Office. • Book allowance of S$500 per academic year. • Accommodation allowance of up to S$2,000 per academic year (applicable to scholarship holders who reside in NTU hostels only). • Computer allowance of S$1,750 (one-off). • Overseas benefits to Year 3 students: - Enrolment and tuition fees at a partner university. - Overseas accommodation and meals/meal allowance at the partner university, including the official duration of the industrial orientation programme/internship. - Return airfare. **Bond Duration:** No bond	• Open to Singapore Citizens and Singapore Permanent Residents. • Possess outstanding Singapore-Cambridge GCE 'A' Level, Diploma awarded by a Polytechnic in Singapore, NUS High School Diploma or IB Diploma qualifications. • Excellent co-curricular records. • Strong leadership qualities and potential.
NTU-University Scholars Programme (NTU-USP) Scholarship	Successful awardees should read a full-time undergraduate degree programme in NTU and be on the NTU-University Scholars Programme (NTU-USP).	• Full coverage of subsidised tuition fees (after tuition grant). • Living allowance of S$6,500 per academic year. • Accommodation allowance of up to S$2,000 per academic year (applicable to scholarship holders who reside in NTU hostels only). • Travel Grant of S$5,000 for an overseas study/attachment programme (one- off) subject to terms and conditions in the Travel Grant form. • Computer allowance of S$1,750 (one-off). • Overseas benefits in the semester of the NTU-USP Study Abroad Programme (structured exchange programme): - Enrolment and tuition fees at a partner university. - Overseas accommodation, living allowances and other related costs. - Return airfare and transportation to/from partner university (one-off). **Bond Duration:** No bond	• Open to all nationalities. • Possess outstanding Singapore-Cambridge GCE 'A' level, Diploma awarded by a polytechnic in Singapore, NUS High School Diploma, IB Diploma or Year 12 equivalent qualifications. • Excellent co-curricular records. • Strong leadership qualities and potential.
Nanyang Scholarship (CN Yang Scholars Programme)	Successful awardees should read a full-time undergraduate degree programme and be on the CN Yang Scholars Programme.	• Full coverage of subsidised tuition fees (after tuition grant). • Living allowance of S$6,500 per academic year. • Accommodation allowance of up to S$2,000 per academic year (applicable to scholarship holders who reside in NTU hostels only). • Travel grant of S$5,000 for an overseas programme (one-off). • Computer allowance of S$1,750 (one-off). • The CN Yang Scholars Programme offers: - Guaranteed four years of stay in NTU halls of residence. - Guaranteed overseas exchange for one semester. - Guaranteed overseas final year research project with coverage for airfare, accommodation, meals, insurance and visa fees. - Opportunities for research attachment from year one onwards and to attend an international conference with subsidy. **Bond Duration:** No bond	• Open to all nationalities. • Possess outstanding Singapore-Cambridge GCE 'A' Level, Diploma awarded by a Polytechnic in Singapore, NUS High School Diploma, IB Diploma or Year 12 equivalent qualifications. • Excellent co-curricular records. • Strong leadership qualities and potential.
Nanyang Scholarship	Successful awardees should read a full-time undergraduate degree programme^ in NTU. ^The scholarship will cover the years of study in NTU. For the Biomedical Sciences & Chinese Medicine programme, the Scholarship will cover only the first three years of study in NTU.	• Full coverage of subsidised tuition fees (after tuition grant). • Living allowance of S$6,500 per academic year. • Accommodation allowance of up to S$2,000 per academic year (applicable to scholarship holders who reside in NTU hostels only). • Travel grant of S$5,000 for an overseas programme (one-off). • Computer allowance of S$1,750 (one-off). • Priority for Overseas Programme. • Participation in Scholars Orientation Programme, Scholars Award Ceremony, Outreach Programmes and Eminent Speaker Series. **Bond Duration:** No bond	• Open to all nationalities. • Possess outstanding Singapore-Cambridge GCE 'A' Level, Diploma awarded by a Polytechnic in Singapore, NUS High School Diploma, IB Diploma or Year 12 equivalent qualifications. • Excellent co-curricular records. • Strong leadership qualities and potential.
College Scholarship	Successful awardees should read a full-time undergraduate degree programme^ in NTU. ^The scholarship will cover the years of study in NTU. For the Biomedical Sciences & Chinese Medicine programme, the Scholarship will cover only the first three years of study in NTU.	• Full coverage of subsidised tuition fees (after tuition grant). • Living allowance of S$3,600 per academic year **Bond Duration:** No bond	• Open to all nationalities. • Possess outstanding Singapore-Cambridge GCE 'A' Level, Diploma awarded by a Polytechnic in Singapore, NUS High School Diploma, IB Diploma or Year 12 equivalent qualifications. • Good co-curricular records. • Good leadership qualities and potential.
For more information on other scholarships such as E. W. Barker Scholarship, Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences Scholarship, LKCMedicine Scholarship, LKY-STEP Award, Toh Kian Chui Scholarship, University Engineering Scholarship, Wee Cho Yaw Future Leaders Award, Wee Kim Wee Legacy Fund Undergraduate Scholarship, ASEAN Undergraduate Scholarship, NTU Science and Engineering Undergraduate Scholarship, please visit https://admissions.ntu.edu.sg/UndergraduateAdmissions/pages/scholarships.aspx			
SMART NATION (CSA / GOVTECH / IMDA)			
Smart Nation Scholarship	ICT related courses^ Example of courses but list is not meant to be exhaustive: • Computer Science • Computer Engg • Electrical & Electronic Engg • Mechanical Engg • Information Technology • Information Systems &/or Design • Information Engg • Information & Comms • Engg in Product Development • Systems Engg • Maths/Statistics/Economics • Behavioural Science • Physics • Law (specifically for IMDA) ^If currently not in a ICT related course but interested to take up a double degree in ICT, you will also be considered.	**Overseas/Local Award includes:** • Tuition and other compulsory fees such as application and examination fees • Mid-term scholars^ (overseas or local) may opt to backdate the scholarship • Living allowance for day-to-day expenses such as bills and living costs • Opportunities for sponsorship of approved student exchange programmes, seminars and conferences • Opportunities for sponsorship of professional courses/certifications taken during course of study • Additional sponsorship of Master's degree (if requirements are met) will be considered on a case-by-case basis • Upon graduation, direct admission to a talent programme with the chosen agency ^ Mid-term scholarship applicants must have at least one semester of university results at the point of application and have not embarked on final year of study. **Bond Duration:** • Overseas Studies: 6 years • Local Studies: 4 years	• Singapore Citizens (includes Permanent Residents who are taking up Singapore Citizenship). • GCE 'A' Level results (or equivalent) or Polytechnic Diploma. • Exemplary co-curricular activities record. • Passionate about having a career in technology. • Pursue an ICT-related degree programme.

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*Research Scientist, A*STAR AI Initiative & Institute of High Performance Computing*

PhD, Stanford University

DR CHESTON TAN
National Science Scholarship Recipient

*Principal Investigator and Programme Manager, A*STAR AI Initiative & Institute for Infocomm Research*

PhD, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

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